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ABSTRACT

Summarizing the organizational structure of operations and giving examples of the kinds of services provided, this report describes the establishment, work methods, and achievements of the National Rural Information Clearinghouse. The clearinghouse program maintains a specialized library, a reference service, and a technical assistance service geared to furnish information about the full range of economic and human development programs that are needed in rural areas, communities, towns, and counties. Seven sections provide background information on (1) the National Rural Center and its relationship to the clearinghouse, (2) the functions and organization of the clearinghouse, (3) its library's collection, layout, and special equipment, (4) its computerized information retrieval services, (5) its technical assistance services, (6) its reference services, and (7) its special programs and outreach activities. While the bulk of the report covers clearinghouse operations between March 1976 and November 1977, a separate section reviews its activities between December 1977 and September 1978. (FM)

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EL TULE
COMMUNITY CENTER

SUMMARY

The subject of this report is the National Rural Information Clearinghouse (NRIC) -- its establishment, methods of work and achievements between March 1976 and November 1977. The Clearinghouse is the information arm of the National Rural Center (NRC), a private, non-profit organization which was created to serve the people in rural America by engaging in research, special demonstration projects, outreach activities and information services.

The Information Clearinghouse is funded by a grant from the Office of Technical Assistance in the Economic Development Administration of the Department of Commerce. Supplementary support is provided from the private fund resources of the National Rural Center.

The mandate of the Clearinghouse is to get appropriate information to the right people at the right time: information about the full range of economic and human development programs that are needed in rural areas, communities, towns and counties.

Frequently, the public officials and private organizations that are aware of the programs do not know how to go about taking advantage of them, or lack the personnel and monetary resources to develop plans and/or proposals necessary to apply for state and federal money and necessary technical support services. The result? A serious information gap.

That information gap is the one that the Clearinghouse attempts to fill, by providing a two-way exchange of information:

- information to the people in rural areas and non-metropolitan towns and communities, their elected officials and organizations; and

- information from those same people about their needs, hopes and frustrations; failures and successes.

The Clearinghouse provides two kinds of information services: reference services and technical assistance:

> Reference services are provided mainly by the library staff and consist primarily of bibliographies, summaries of and status reports on legislation, and leads to primary sources of information. The Clearinghouse uses an electronic data terminal to assist with bibliographic reference services.
>
> Technical assistance services are defined as those designed to help people in rural areas and non-metropolitan communities gain access to sources of public and private funding and technical expertise in community economic and human development programs. Two rural programs advisors and one special projects advisor provide most of the technical assistance. The purpose is to establish links between the communities and people seeking assistance and the best possible source of the programs or aid being sought. One tool used in this effort is the Federal Assistance Program Retrieval System (FAPRS.)

All services are provided without charge. A letter or telephone call to the Rural Center and its Information Clearinghouse will start the wheels rolling:

NATIONAL RURAL CENTER
Suite 1000
1828 L Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Telephone - (202) 331-0258

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE.

Details about how the Information Clearinghouse operates and its special programs are provided in subsequent sections of this report. A broad-brush summary shows that during the twenty months (March 1976 through November 1977) the Clearinghouse has:

- Established a special library which contains a rather extensive basic collection of materials that are relevant to rural affairs: reference tools, books, monographs, demographic data, periodicals, and congressional and executive-branch documents.
- Instituted a computer information retrieval capability through which we have access to more than 20 data bases, including ERIC, FAPRS, CRECORD, and so forth.
- Established and operated a system for responding to requests from communities, organizations, and individuals for leads to sources of funding and technical assistance to help make it possible to implement programs they want.

- Helped many communities get money and technical assistance through the information and leads provided.

- Provided a reference service for those seeking information in connection with special research on rural matters, or those wanting to know what other communities or organizations are doing and so forth.

- Developed and put into a computerized listing system some 14,000 names of key rural officials and community leaders, and gained cooperation for access to additional names through agreements to rent lists.

- Evolved, published, and distributed a DIRECTORY OF RURAL ORGANIZATIONS. (Initial funding was provided by the EDA grant for a first and second printings; an update and third printing were funded by the Department of Agriculture, which also is funding an addendum on private resources for rural programs.)

- Initiated a program of "Issues Meetings," in which we bring together representatives of rural organizations and federal departments and/or agencies to share information and discuss key issues as they develop -- for example, credit, health, rural development, communications, etc.

- Carried out a continuing program of meetings with federal policy-making officials to exchange information.

- Undertaken an initial evaluation of the Clearinghouse's technical and reference services -- the first step in establishing a continuous system of evaluation.

Who is included among the rural Americans served by the Clearinghouse? We include all people who live on or off farms in non-metropolitan areas--whether in the open countryside, or in communities, townships, and towns of up to 50,000 in population--and the rural pockets within metropolitan areas.

This report provides information about the National Rural Center's founding, goals and relationship to the Clearinghouse; the organization and operations of the Clearinghouse as a whole; the library, the computerized information retrieval capabilities, the technical assistance services, the reference services, and special projects.

PART I

THE NATIONAL RURAL CENTER (NRC): BACKGROUND AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE

I 1 Founding

I 2 Purposes and Themes

I 3 Methods of Operation

I 4 Sources of Financial Support

I 5 Board Members

I 6 Chief Operating Officers and Program or Project Directors

PART I

THE NATIONAL RURAL CENTER AND ITS INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE

I 1 FOUNDING

The subject of this report is the National Rural Information Clearinghouse (NRIC) -- its establishment, methods of work, and achievements. The Clearinghouse, however, is not a free-standing agency: it is a part of the National Rural Center (NRC). To understand the Clearinghouse and keep it in perspective, it is important, therefore, to know something about NRC - the parent organization.

The National Rural Center did not rise "full-blown" from the sea, so to speak. Two years of careful planning, exploration and research preceded actual establishment. Several volumes of background information and data about the needs in rural areas were gathered; key individuals with experience in rural affairs were engaged to develop papers on potential roles and strategies that might be suitable to a national center on rural affairs; preliminary lists of national and regional organizations were compiled; and a board of directors was named. Much of that original board leadership came from members of the Task Force on Southern Rural Development, thus assuring an understanding of the problems and potential of rural areas.

Out of those efforts, then, the National Rural Center was created. It was incorporated in January 1975 and began official operations in March 1976. NRC is an independent, non-profit organization having a 501 (c) (3) tax classification as a charitable organization. The Center is not a membership organization, nor does it lobby in the traditional sense of that term. Rather, it seeks to serve the people of rural America by engaging in research, special demonstration projects, outreach activities and information services.

I 2 PURPOSES AND THEMES

The principal guidelines, goals and themes undergirding the work of the Center are as follows:

- The Center includes among the people it serves in rural America all people who live on or off farms in non-metropolitan areas--whether in the open countryside, or in communities, counties, townships, small towns--and rural pockets within metropolitan areas. "Small towns" means communities having populations up to 50,000. Definitions of that sort, are by nature, somewhat arbitrary; but that description of what NRC means by "rural America" provides a frame-work for decisions about programs and services.

- The Center serves rural people by developing and advocating more effective national, state and local policies and programs to meet their needs and help them achieve full potential. The goal of this particular work is to broaden interest in and support for new rural initiatives among non-rural as well as rural people by providing well-documented policy recommendations and needed information.

- The Center's major concern is poverty in rural areas; but it seeks ways to help alleviate poverty, not in isolation, but in relationship to the rest of society. Recognizing that forty percent of the nation's poor live in rural areas, the center believes that the nation should be as concerned with rural poverty as with urban poverty.

- The major theme of all the Center's programs and activities is to increase peoples' options: to try to assure that conditions and opportunities in rural areas and non-metropolitan communities are such that people will have a genuine choice about where to live and a chance to achieve a satisfying and rewarding life-style wherever they choose to live.

- The Rural Center serves all America by seeking measures that will enrich the interdependence and interrelationships among rural, suburban and urban communities. It avoids the approach of trying to solve the problems of each as though they were competing, unrelated entities. Its recognition that rural and urban people alike have a common interest in the development and implementation of sound rural programs and policies is basic to all the Center's activities.

- The Center believes that bringing the people into the decision-making processes at every level of government is essential to achieving the full promise of rural America. And that commitment is central to all of its research projects, programs and services. The Center plans, therefore, to act as the service arm of an extensive "rural network". That "network" will comprise cooperating groups of local, state, regional and national organizations; interested people in small towns, counties and states throughout the nation; and special task forces with expertise on such important subjects as rural health care, employment, credit and education.

PART I 3 METHODS OF OPERATION

To pursue its mission and the goals outlined in the previous section, the Center organizes its work into three basic functions: policy development, information service, and communications.

3.1 Policy Development

NRC seeks to develop policy recommendations relating to rural needs by conducting demonstration programs and projects, by evaluating and using the results of existing research, and by undertaking basic research where it has identified gaps in information and data. To help ensure that rural concerns are taken into consideration in Congress and the Executive Branch, NRC, jointly with other groups, monitors the writing of legislation and program regulations.

Special projects and/or program activities have been undertaken with regard to manpower and employment, rural health care and services, education, rural justice and legal services, communications systems, and rural development. A brief description of three of the programs provides some insight into NRC's operation and methods of pursuing its goals.*

Health

NRC's health program began with its co-sponsorship of the Southern Rural Health Conference in Nashville, Tennessee in October 1976. The purposes of the conference were to review and evaluate the findings of the Southern Rural Health Study, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and to encourage people interested in rural health problems to develop their own state organizations to deal with state laws and regulations which create barriers to the delivery of health care in rural areas.

Following the conference, NRC issued the REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SOUTHERN RURAL HEALTH CONFERENCE, which has been distributed widely to policymakers and members of rural health groups. In response to demand by participants it also started publishing the RURAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER which provides information about federal policies and activities related to rural health issues. To date, the newsletter has been available upon request, at no cost. Another result of the conference, was the launching of state health organizations in four Southern States. They are independent groups, but NRC provides them with information about federal policies and the results of public and private research on rural health problems.

Also, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare awarded NRC a grant to conduct a research conference on the use of nurse practitioners and physician assistants (NP's and PA's) in rural and urban areas. The conference (held June 21 and 22, 1977) brought together researchers, policymakers and practitioners to reach consensus on those NP/PA issues which have been resolved by research, and to develop an agenda for researching the unresolved issues.

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*(Individuals interested in more information should write to NRC, asking to be placed on the mailing list for its periodic "Activities Report".)

Manpower

The NRC is in the second year of a projected three-year demonstration project to develop a community/federal approach to ensure that rural poor people, particularly minorities, receive a fair share of construction jobs generated by federally-funded projects. The approach involves a combination of efforts to organize local people, to gain agreements (voluntary or through affirmative action plans) for the hiring of minorities, and to establish outreach employment programs.

In its first year, the project was developed in connection with construction of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway in Alabama and Mississippi. Because of the joint efforts of a number of organizations, the first affirmative action plan on a major federal construction site in a rural area was imposed on the Waterway. Included among the participating groups were the Minorities People Council of the Tennessee-Tombigbee; the Federation of Southern Cooperatives; Recruitment, Training and Placement, Inc.; and the International Operating Engineers Union.

During the second year, NRC was involved in working with the Tennessee-Tombigbee outreach employment effort and with testing the replicability of the concept at several other federal construction projects. At the end of three years, the NRC will publish a report documenting the results of these efforts. If results justify it, NRC will also present recommendations on how the model can be used elsewhere to ensure that rural people get a fair share of jobs on federally-funded construction projects.

Rural Development

● NRC evaluated the effectiveness of programs funded under Title V of the Rural Development Act of 1972. In brief, the intent of Title V is to encourage the nation's land grant institutions, and through them, other institutions of higher learning, to devote more resources (expertise, time, technical assistance) to rural development activities. The project report includes a policy implications statement which looks at prospective Title V small farms programs, as well as the future of Title V generally. The following documents on the project are available from NRC:

1) The 424 page report on the evaluation of Title V, RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE LAND GRANT UNIVERSITY, including an Executive summary--$10.00.

2) The 460 page DIRECTORY OF STATE TITLE V RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS, including a subject and personnel index--$10.00.

3) A policy statement entitled TOWARD A PROCESS FOR A SUCCESSFUL RURAL STRATEGY--$1.00.

- NRC is working with the Opportunity Funding Corporation to design a financial institution that can provide capital to increase investment in institutions and regions in order to support an increased level of jobs and income in rural and urban areas. Funded by grants from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and Mott Foundation, the project began in September 1977 and is scheduled to run for 17 months. Recommendations will be presented to Congress and rural organizations.

- In conjunction with the Farm Foundation and the Economic Research Service (U.S. Department of Agriculture), NRC is co-sponsoring a series of studies and workshops designed to develop concrete proposals for a federal small farms policy. The first conference was held in October, 1977 at the Winrock International Livestock Research and Training Center at Petit Jean Mountain, (Morrilton, Arkansas).

3.2 Information: The relationship of the Information Clearinghouse to NRC.

To carry out its mission of providing information to people in rural areas and communities, and to gain information and understanding in return, NRC's founders included an Information Clearinghouse in the original design for the Center. Funding to establish and continue operating the Clearinghouse has been provided by the Office of Technical Assistance in the Economic Development Administration (Department of Commerce). Additional support is provided by NRC from its private-source funds. The operating theory and guiding principle is that the Center and the Clearinghouse are really one entity, each dependent upon the other and both dedicated to the same goals.

The Clearinghouse divides its services into two major categories--reference assistance and technical assistance:

Reference Assistance.

- At the heart of the Clearinghouse is a specialized library--a collection of books and documents having a primary focus on rural matters. The library staff and a Congressional Reference Specialist provide most of the reference services to the general public and to NRC's program specialists, but all the clearinghouse staff members and NRC's program specialists participate in this service as well. The Clearinghouse has an electronic data terminal and contracts with three major commercial on-line retrieval systems, giving it access to many data bases for bibliographic searches.

Technical Assistance.

- Technical assistance is provided by rural programs advisors who help officials, organizations and individuals in rural areas and communities take advantage of federal program assistance--money and technical expertise. Assistance is sought from public and private sources. The Clearinghouse itself does not make grants or send out technical experts, such as engineers or planners. Its expertise (technical capability) is in the form of knowledge about federal and state programs, agencies that provide specialized technical assistance, and private sources or money for community projects.

And how does all that activity relate to the National Rural Center itself?

The entire staff of the Clearinghouse has a primary obligation to identify gaps in information, research, data (especially demographic and economic), thus feeding into the Center's goal to engage in research when there is a demonstrated need.

Staff members who help rural communities and organizations find support for economic and human development programs try to develop special insights as to why rural communities have difficulty gaining access to the kinds of assistance they need: Is it due to a basic fault in programs? A lack of sufficient funds? Absence of capability at the local level to plan for and implement programs they want and need? Barriers in the federal structure?

All the work of the Clearinghouse, then, has the dual purpose of providing information and services and feeding into all the Center's efforts to stay on top of critical needs and to help create a greater awareness nationwide of rural problems.

3.3 Communications

The purpose of NRC's communications activities is to try to assure a continuous two-way exchange of information and ideas between the people in non-metropolitan America and policy-makers at the state and federal levels of government, and between rural people and the people in metropolitan areas, in an effort to create greater mutual understanding. To that end, NRC has participated in or initiated the following kinds of non-project activities:

- NRC hosted a luncheon meeting which brought together key federal officials and representatives of private foundations interested in rural issues. The purpose of the meeting was to exchange ideas about the most critical needs of people in rural America and to discuss possible programs to meet those needs, especially demonstration projects under private auspices that might guide changes in federal policy.

- NRC personnel have participated in on-going efforts to bring the needs of rural people to the attention of policymakers dealing with questions related to welfare reform and income support, the development of a national rural strategy, the need for health services, and so forth.

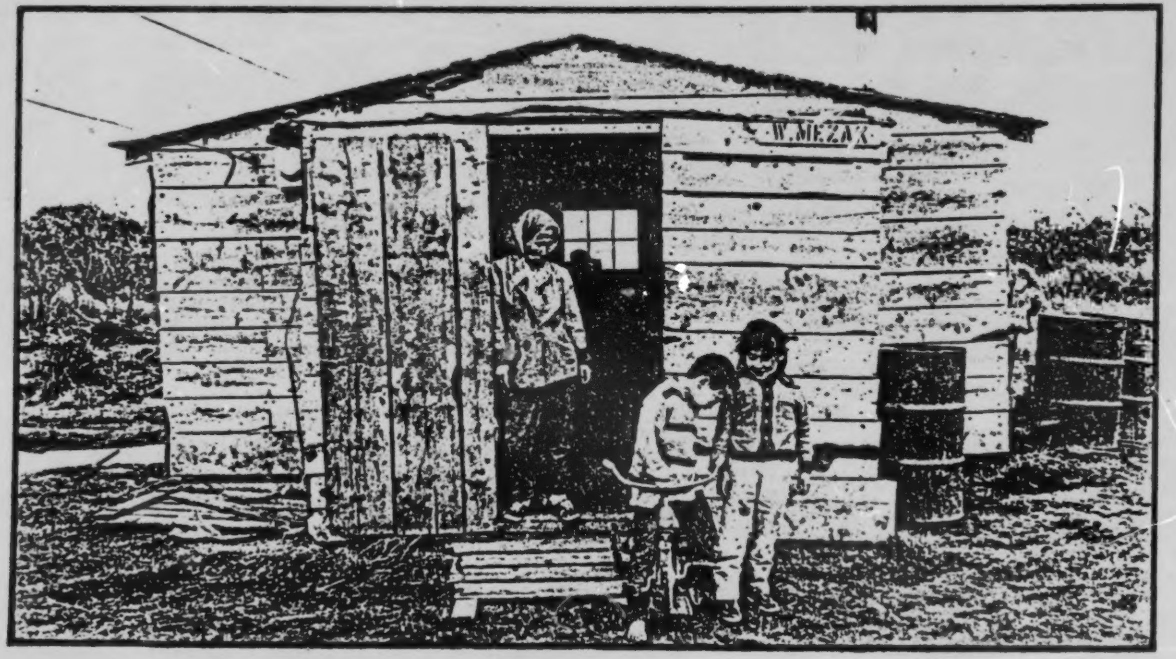
- Several federal agencies continue to look to NRC for advice on rural policy questions and as the convenor of organizations to discuss policy, especially in connection with efforts to develop a national rural strategy.

- NRC has been responsible for providing insight on national rural problems at conferences sponsored by such organizations as the Countryside Council of Minnesota, the Council on Foundations, the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment, and various health-related groups.

- The NRC worked with planners of the White House Conference on Balanced National Growth and Economic Development to be sure that rural interests and concerns would be given major consideration. In this connection, it sponsored several meetings that brought together conference planners and representatives of rural organizations.

- The NRC is a member of the Executive Committee of the Advisory Team to the Congressional Rural Caucus and chairs the Team's Subcommittee on Health.

- The NRC was asked to and agreed to hold on a regular basis meetings of Washington-based rural groups to discuss issues and meet new federal officials.



I 4 SOURCES OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Through grants and contracts, the NRC has received funds from:

1. American Bar Association
2. The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation
3. The Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce
4. Department of Health, Education and Welfare
5. The Farm Foundation
6. The Ford Foundation
7. The International Union Of Operating Engineers
8. Lilly Endowment, Inc.
9. National Institute of Education
10. The New World Foundation
11. North Carolina Manpower Development Corporation
12. The Public Welfare Foundation
13. Sid Richardson Foundation
14. The Rockefeller Brothers Fund
15. The Rockefeller Foundation
16. U.S. Department of Agriculture (Cooperative State Research Services and Extension Service)
17. United Auto Workers
18. Winthrop Rockefeller Charitable Trust

I 5 BOARD MEMBERS

Five members of the original NRC Board of Directors were appointed to key posts in the administration of President Carter. To accept the appointment they were required to resign from the NRC board and all other such positions.

The current members of the board including those elected June 3, 1977 are:

Mr. Charles D. Bannerman, (co-chairman of the board), Executive Director, Mississippi Action for Community Education, Greenville, Mississippi

Dr. Charles E. Bishop (co-chairman of the board), President, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas

Robert S. Browne, Ph.D., Director, The Black Economic Research Center, New York City

Mr. David L. Chewning, Vice President and Treasurer, National Rural Center, Washington, D.C.

Faith Dunn, E.Ed., Assistant Professor of Education, Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

Humberto Fuentes, Executive Director of the Idaho Migrant Council, Boise, and President of the Board of Directors of the National Association of Farmworker Organizations.

Tom Haan, Executive Director of the Orleans County Council of Social Agencies, Newport, Vermont (also active as a director of a three-county Community Action Program and as an organizer of a housing CDC.)

Mr. Myron Jones, Executive Director, Indian Education, Inc., Alburquerque, New Mexico

E. Walton Jones, Ph.D., Vice President, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Mr. Alfredo Navarro, Executive Director, Central Coast Countries Community Development Corporation, Aptos, California

Mr. Roderick N. Petrey, (NRC Secretary), Attorney, Miami, Florida.

The Rev. Bennett Dean Poage, Executive Director, Human-Economic Appalachian Development Corporation, Berea, Kentucky

Richard Remington, Ph.D., Dean, School of Public Health, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan

William Roy, M.D., Saint Francis Hospital, Topeka, Kansas

William M. Ross, Executive Director, Recruitment and Training Program, Inc. New York City

James Summer, Minneapolis, Minnesota (former president of General Mills Corporation)

The former board members now in the administration are:

Mr. Ernest Green, Assistant Secretary of Labor

Dr. Juanita Kreps, Secretary of Commerce

Dr. Ray Marshall, Secretary of Labor

Ms. Arabella Martinez, Assistant Secretary for Human Development (Department of Health, Education and Welfare)

Mr. Alex Mercure, Assistant Secretary for Rural Development (Department of Agriculture)

I 6 CHIEF OPERATING OFFICERS AND PROGRAM AND PROJECT DIRECTORS

John M. Cornman, President

David L. Chewning, Vice President/Treasurer

Elizabeth A. Vinson, Director, Information Clearinghouse

Marian Shamu, Head Librarian

Ulysses Bell, Director, Manpower Programs

Shan Cronk, Director, Rural Justice

Julian Ellison, Director, Economic Development

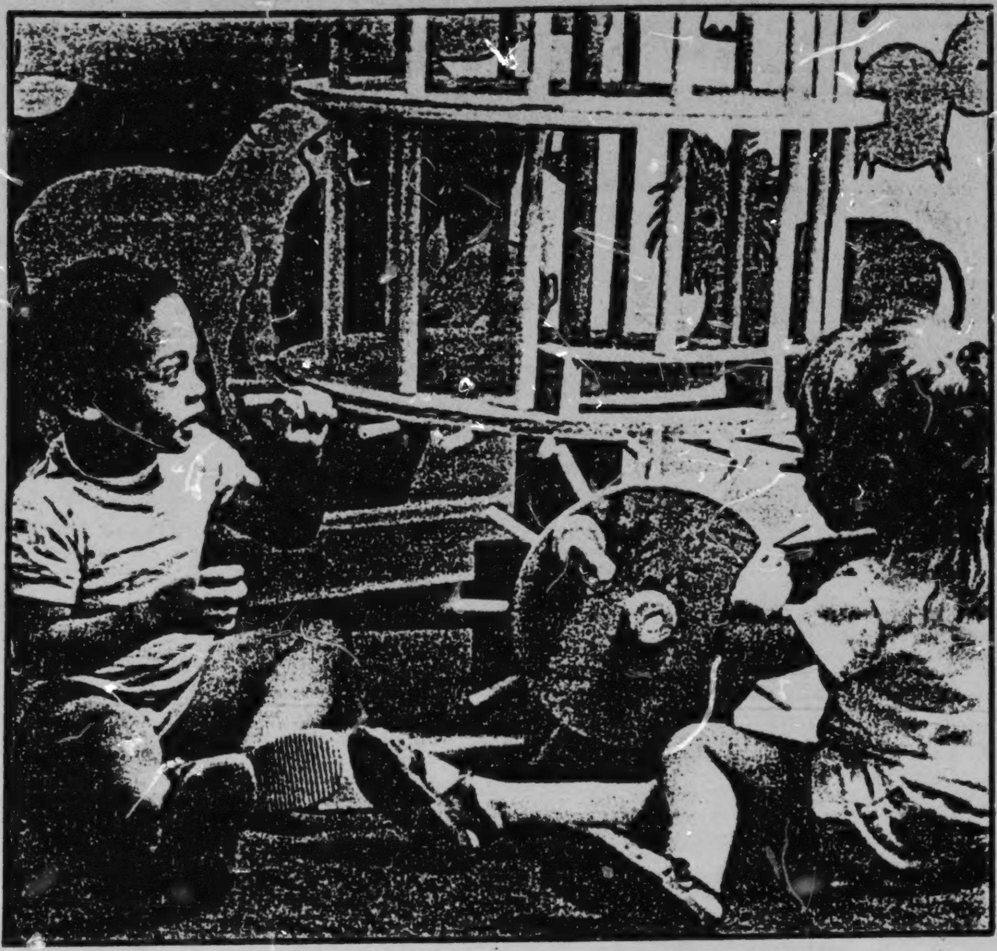
Alice Hersh, Director, Health Programs

Kenny Johnson, Director, Southeast Regional Office (Atlanta)

Barbara Kincaid, Director, Public Information

Jonathan Sher, Director, Education Programs

Curtis Toews, Director, Southwest Regional Office (Austin)



PART II

THE INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE: A SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

II 1 Basic Purpose and Responsibilities
II 2 Major Achievements to Date: An Overall View
II 3 Structure
II 4 Staff
II 5 Whom It Serves and How to Use Its Services

PART II

THE INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE

II 1 BASIC PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The National Rural Information Clearinghouse (NRIC), usually known as the Information Clearinghouse, is the information and service arm of the National Rural Center (NRC). NRC established the Clearinghouse to serve the needs of NRC and rural constituencies for information about rural affairs, and to provide rural communities with assistance in gaining access to federal services and programs that are essential to rural and non-metropolitan development and revitalization.

Basic funding is provided by the Office of Technical Assistance in the Office of Economic Development, Department of Commerce. That grant is matched by funds and in-kind support from NRC's private resources--a major and essential contribution.

The Clearinghouse started formal operations in March 1976, at which time it began assembling its staff. Almost immediately, the Clearinghouse started receiving requests for assistance, even though there had been no formal announcement of its existence. By October 1976 it was fully operational, and notices about its services were sent to about 30,000 officials, leaders and organizations in non-metropolitan areas and communities.

In summary, the mandate of the Information Clearinghouse is to get the appropriate information to the right people at the right time. We have made a good beginning--one that has enabled us to realize more fully how great the needs are and has increased our determination to expand our capabilities to meet those needs.

Information about human and economic development programs--information that is accurate, pertinent, and timely--is largely missing in rural areas. Staff members of the National Rural Center and its Information Clearinghouse understood that and the consequences of isolation in many remote rural communities when they began operations. Contacts and experience since that time have sharpened that understanding and have brought about a new awareness that many small town and county officials in not-so-isolated areas as well simply do not have access to information necessary for their participation in programs to which they are entitled: specific programs that can help them increase their capabilities to provide job training and employment, transportation, economic development in general and especially for energy resources, economic and job-training opportunities for minorities, safe water supplies, adequate and environmentally sound sewer systems, and the human support services that are necessary in every community.

Frequently, the public officials and private organizations that are aware of the programs, do not know how to go about taking advantage of them, or lack the personnel and monetary resources to develop plans and/or proposals necessary to apply for state and federal money and necessary technical support services.

That information gap is the one that the Clearinghouse attempts to fill.

Another important function carried out by the Information Clearinghouse is the development of a two-way exchange of information:

- information to the people in rural areas and non-metropolitan towns and communities, their elected officials and organizations; and
- information from those same people about their needs, hopes and frustrations; failures and successes.

Clearinghouse staff members treat that two-way exchange of information as critical to NRC's understanding of what the people themselves want and to its mission of seeking alternatives to existing national policies: new policies and programs that may be necessary if the areas and communities in rural America that are vital and robust are to remain that way, and if declining or static communities are to be revitalized.

The relationship between NRC and its Clearinghouse, then, is symbiotic. And because of that the work of the Clearinghouse staff takes on greater and more interesting dimension than is sometimes true of clearinghouse operations. For example, the specific knowledge acquired in the process of helping a community evaluate alternative resources, and select and install the resources for a water quality improvement program, is useful to NRC's officers and program specialists in helping to redirect federal policy and programs.

Responsibilities of the Clearinghouse set forth in the initial grant from the Office of Technical Assistance are as follows:

- Determine continuously what specific information rural leaders need--basic facts, analyses, evaluations.
- Collect the needed information systematically and continuously.
- Turn the information into a useful form for rural leaders.
- Evaluate how the information is used, both by its rural recipients and by other segments of the National Rural Center.

- Set up communications systems; develop a computerized mailing system; and begin a technical assistance program of leadership-development and field services.

- Identify gaps in the data for the development of needed research.

That is a rather comprehensive list of responsibilities, and it was estimated originally that it would take a full three years to develop all facets of the proposed program. It was never anticipated that the grant from EDA alone would cover all costs of such an extensive project. It was recognized that to "turn the information into a useful form for rural leaders" and to "set up a communications system," and to "begin a technical assistance program of leadership development" would be joint responsibilities of the Clearinghouse and NRC, with additional funding from special-grant projects. Some of the work in those three areas is well under way and plans have been made for getting the programs into full operation. The money to carry them out, however, is not yet in hand.

II 2 MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE: AN OVERALL VIEW

Details about how the Information Clearinghouse operates and its special programs are provided in subsequent sections of this report. A broad-brush summary shows that during the twenty months (March 1976 through November 1977) the Clearinghouse has:

- Established a special library which contains a rather extensive basic collection of materials that are relevant to rural affairs: reference tools, books, monographs, demographic data, periodicals, and congressional and executive-branch documents.

- Instituted a computer information retrieval capability through which we have access to more than 20 data bases, including ERIC, FAPRS, CRECORD, and so forth.

- Established and operated a system for responding to requests from communities, organizations, and individuals for leads to sources of funding and technical assistance to help make it possible to implement programs they want.

- Helped many communities get money and technical assistance through the information and leads provided.

- Provided a reference service for those seeking information in connection with special research on rural matters, or those wanting to know what other communities or organizations are doing and so forth.

- Developed and put into a computerized listing system some 14,000 names of key rural officials and community leaders, and gained cooperation for access to additional names through agreements to rent lists.

- Evolved, published, and distributed a DIRECTORY OF RURAL ORGANIZATIONS. (Initial funding was provided by the EDA grant for a first and second printings; an update and third printing were funded by the Department of Agriculture, which also is funding an addendum on private resources for rural programs.)

- Initiated a program of "Issues Meetings," in which we bring together representatives of rural organizations and federal departments and/or agencies to share information and discuss key issues as they develop -- for example, credit, health, rural development, communications, etc.

- Carried out a continuing program of meetings with federal policy-making officials to exchange information.

- Undertaken an initial evaluation of the Clearinghouse's technical and reference services -- the first step in establishing a continuous system of evaluation.

II 3 STRUCTURE

There are two categories of Clearinghouse functions: reference services (described in PART III-THE LIBRARY AND PART VI-REFERENCE ASSISTANCE SERVICES) and technical assistance services (described in PART V - TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES). In a sense, the division is arbitrary because the services are closely interwoven and function as one.

Reference services are defined as those through which information is made available to individuals about rural affairs in general and about the special concerns of the National Rural Center. Most of the reference service work is carried out by the library staff and the Congressional Reference Specialist, although other staff members help as well.

Public officials, educators, researchers, community leaders, NRC program and project officers - all keep a steady stream of requests coming into the office. We supply bibliographies, summaries of and status reports on legislation, leads to primary sources of information, and, on occasion, copies of short documents that are otherwise hard to obtain. The library does not collect supplies of brochures and pamphlets for distribution: it provides information about the sources of those materials. To assist in the reference services, the Clearinghouse has an electronic data terminal and contracts with three major on-line systems, thus providing access to many data bases that have relevance to the Center's program and projects. Three staff members are trained in its use, the Head Librarian being the chief operator.

Technical assistance services are defined as those designed to help rural areas and non-metropolitan communities gain access to sources of public and private funding and technical expertise in community economic and human development programs. This service is provided by two rural programs advisors, the director of the Clearinghouse and a special projects advisor. The expertise of this staff is its knowledge of federal programs, quasi-public and private organizations having staff specialists and technicians, and foundations having interests in rural affairs. At present, the Clearinghouse does not have such technical experts as planners or water/sewer design engineers who can go out to help local communities. Neither does it make grants or loans to communities for implementing programs. It provides information and establishes links between the people, communities or organizations seeking assistance and the best possible source of such help that the Clearinghouse can locate.

To provide technical assistance, the staff carries out these basic functions:

- It searches out all the federal programs and many of the private organizations that might be sources of funding or expert assistance.
- It contacts agency and organization personnel (in the D.C. area and in the field) to consult them about problems and to refer them directly to the inquirer.
- It refers some requests to organizations that have technical specialists or to federal agency offices charged directly with the responsibility for administering the programs needed.
- It follows up on the requests to determine whether the aid available from public and/or private agencies was in fact delivered; whether or not it was satisfactory, what further action is needed, and so forth.

II 4 STAFF

The staff to carry out the programs listed above is as follows: Director of the Clearinghouse, Head Librarian, Congressional Reference Specialist, Senior Rural Programs Advisor, Rural Programs Advisor, Special Projects Advisor, Administrative Assistant - part time, part-time Cataloguer, Library Assistant, Library Technician, and Secretary. NRC in-kind funding provides support for additional secretarial, bookkeeping, and administrative staff. That support is backed up by administrative and policy support from the President and Vice President, both of whom devote a great deal of time to the Clearinghouse.

Chief staff responsibilities are as follows:

Director of the Information Clearinghouse:

- directs and coordinates the work of the Clearinghouse;
- coordinates the work of the Clearinghouse with that of the National Rural Center, working with the chief officers and program specialists--one half of the salary being paid from NRC private resource funds;
- develops plans for financing the program expansion of the Clearinghouse and seeks funds for special projects related to its community outreach mission;
- provides technical assistance on a very limited number of requests.

Head Librarian

- determines policy for collection development;
- provides reference and referral services;
- plans and coordinates library programs and budgets;
- conducts computer bibliographic searches;
- supervises and manages the library staff which includes:

  Cataloguer:
  - catalogs monographs, reference materials, and government documents according to Anglo-American Cataloging Rules;
  - develops cataloging procedures;
  - maintains the authority files and card catalog.

  Library Assistant:
  - carries out a variety of para-professional and clerical-managerial tasks;
  - assists with preliminary cataloging;
  - assists with ready reference questions and locates materials for users;
  - assists the Congressional Reference Specialist.

  Library Technician:
  - provides clerical support for all library programs;
  - maintains the serials collection;
  - assists in library acquisitions.

Senior Rural Programs Advisor

- provides technical assistance to rural communities, with specialties in transportation, water/sewer, recreation and related programs;
- coordinates the "issue meetings" program;
- developed and maintains the DIRECTORY OF RURAL ORGANIZATIONS and promotes linkages with other rural-interest organizations;
- carries out major special projects related to outreach programs for economic development;
- conducts computer searches, primarily FAPRS.

Rural Programs Advisor

- provides technical assistance--with specialties in housing, general community development, fire protection and related programs;
- maintains the system for keeping track of requests for technical and reference requests by name, subject and state;
- develops lists of regional rural organizations.

Congressional Reference Specialist

- manages the collection of congressional documents;
- provides reference services with regard to actions in Congress and the Executive Branch;
- works on special projects - for example, the Congressional information work on welfare reform;
- conducts computer searches.

Special Projects Advisor

- is developing an appendix to the DIRECTORY OF RURAL ORGANIZATIONS that will list major sources of possible funding from foundations interested in rural affairs;
- provides technical assistance, with specialties in health, poverty, and community arts programs;
- provides major assistance in seeking private funds and technical assistance on a wide range of rural development issues.

II 5 WHOM IT SERVES AND HOW TO USE ITS SERVICES

Anyone seeking basic information on rural affairs or guidance to assist rural communities with economic and human development programs may request assistance from the Information Clearinghouse. Individuals and organizations seeking reference services need not be in rural areas or small towns if the information desired is related to development of rural programs. Those requesting reference assistance might include foundations, research centers, researchers in small and large institutions, and organizations and individuals in rural areas -- whether in public office or private organizations. Those seeking technical assistance might include local and state governing officials, nongovernmental membership and service organizations, federal departments and agencies, regional economic and planning agencies, members of Congress and Congressional committees.

For assistance, contact the Clearinghouse by mail or telephone (202) 331-0258. Inquiries for reference material or data should be directed to the library; other requests should be directed to the Information Clearinghouse at the National Rural Center. A telephone call indicating the general nature of the request will be answered by a call from the appropriate staff member of the Clearinghouse who will get full details. There is no charge for services.

PART III

THE LIBRARY

III 1 THE COLLECTION
- 1.1 Collection Development
- 1.2 The General Collection
  - 1.2.1 Reference Collection
  - 1.2.2 Books, Monographs, etc.
  - 1.2.3 Serials
  - 1.2.4 Issues Files
  - 1.2.5 Organization Files
  - 1.2.6 Archives
- 1.3 The Congressional Document Collection
  - 1.3.1 General Description
  - 1.3.2 Major Reference Tools
  - 1.3.3 Tracking and Locating Copies of Legislation

III 2 LAYOUT AND SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

PART III

THE LIBRARY

III 1 THE COLLECTION

1.1 Collection Development

When plans were being developed for the National Rural Center and its Information Clearinghouse, it was decided that the Center must have its own library that would specialize in information and services related to rural affairs. NRC's organizers wanted a facility that would serve its own program and project staffs, and, equally important, would supply high quality information and technical services to governing officials and people in rural areas and nonmetropolitan communities.

Starting from a very minimal base, the library staff formulated guidelines for collection development, selected, acquired, and organized materials that support the missions of NRC and the Clearinghouse. In a word, a new specialized library has been created. One visitor who had been seeking information in several libraries, said: "Oh! This library looks so organized! It looks as though you can find what you want." And she did.

During the twenty months between April 1976 and November 1977, the staff has continually maintained an aggressive program for collecting pertinent information and has attained its goal of establishing a centralized library of highly selective information on rural social, economic, and development issues. This collection is unusual in that it is devoted entirely to the purpose of collecting materials and to providing reference services on a wide range of rural development issues. Researchers, rural officials, organizations, and librarians, now recognize the library's speciality, and look to the Information Clearinghouse Library as a valuable basic resource.

Specifically, the staff has:

- collected selective source materials - major background information and demographic data required for independent research;
- developed a basic core of reference tools and information for providing ready reference and referral services;
- developed an extensive collection of journals, newsletters, newspapers which provides timely information on rural issues;
- collected technical reports and conference proceedings that provide information about current developments;
- collected congressional and executive branch documents and other tools that aid in monitoring national legislation and regulatory actions that affect rural people and their communities.

The collection now consists of information in clearly-defined program and problem areas of concern to NRC and others interested in rural affairs. The primary coverage includes the following issues:

rural health care and delivery
needs and problems of small farmers and farm workers
human resource development
quality of rural education
employment opportunities
credit and finance for rural investors
economic development (including public works)
rural justice and legal assistance
rural poverty
public service programs
socio-economic characteristics of rural residents
growth policy
community development
land use and protection of prime agricultural lands

Secondary coverage includes:

conservation of natural resources
women in rural areas and small communities
planning
housing
public assistance and social services
water and sewer services

1. 2 The Collection As a Whole

The collection now contains over 750 cataloged books, monographs and technical reports; 400 volumes of uncataloged material; 235 newsletters, newspapers and journals; 200 volumes of reference type material; 700 congressional and executive branch documents; and twenty file drawers of materials on issues, legislation, rural interest organizations, government agencies, and foundations.

The library has not attempted to duplicate the vast resources of large public and private institutions, (e.g., the National Agricultural Library), but uses those resources as an extension of its own collection.

Materials have been organized so that items or groups of items may be identified and located quickly. The collection has been classified and arranged in six categories:

- Reference Collection
- General Book Collection
- Congressional and Executive Branch Documents
- Serials
- Issues files
- Organization, government agency and foundation files
- NRC Archives

1.2.1 Reference Collection

Although the entire library collection is used for providing reference services, the reference collection can best be described as a miscellany of information selected on the basis of how consistently useful the source is in answering ready-reference questions. The central reference collection, then, includes all the primary reference-type volumes useful for locating specific information. This is a non-circulating collection to insure that often-consulted volumes will be on hand when needed, and is arranged according to a simplified classification scheme for quick and convenient use.

The reference collection is concentrated on bibliographies on various subjects, directories of all types (foundations, associations, etc.) statistical compendiums, and fund-raising resource materials. There is also a special emphasis on the annual reports of foundations and government agencies, and less emphasis on encyclopedias, atlases, yearbooks, almanacs, and other geographical sources.

The most frequently used sources are CATALOGUE OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE, FEDERAL YELLOW BOOK, U.S. GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION MANUAL, ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ASSOCIATIONS, WASHINGTON IV, BOOKS IN-PRINT, STATISTICAL ABSTRACTS, THE FOUNDATION DIRECTORY, THE CONGRESSIONAL YELLOW BOOK, AND THE FOUNDATION CENTER SOURCE BOOK PROFILES.

1.2.2 General Book Collection

The basic guides used in developing the general book collection were RURAL DEVELOPMENT LITERATURE: AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY and U.S. GOVERNMENT OFFICE PUBLICATIONS USEFUL FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT. Now many more sources are used and this particular collection has more than 750 cataloged and 400 uncatalogued documents.

Under the rubric of "general book collection", we include hardback books, monographs and studies, major brochures, -- documents that are both retrospective and current. An idea of the breadth of information in this collection is provided by the following sample list of subjects covered: rural development policies and alternatives, extent and persistence of poverty in rural areas, health manpower and distribution, sociological aspects of small farming, impact of industrialization on rural economic development, residential and industrial waste problems in rural areas, issues in land use planning, socio-economic characteristics of migrant workers, and rural transportation problems.

The staff works steadily and persistently to strengthen this collection by seeking out new ideas, strategies, procedures, and techniques appropriate for rural development--from land grant colleges, government agencies, public-interest groups, and research organizations.

I.2.3 Serials

One of the major achievements has been the development of the serials collection, which is a major component of the library. The collection is especially valuable because of the timeliness of the information and the variety of sources represented. The collection now has over 235 title entries of journals, newsletter, and newspapers that treat rural development issues. Serials in the collection are issued by professional societies, independent business enterprises, small communities, government agencies, and a wide variety of private nonprofit organizations.

As an aid in locating information and having access to the contents of a large portion of the serials, the staff has created an in-house index file of major articles, which is available in the card catalog. Also, specialized indexing and abstracting tools, such as the MONTHLY CATALOG OF U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS and the PUBLIC AFFAIRS INFORMATION SERVICE BULLETIN, are included in the serials collection.

The sample listing below gives insight into the scope of the serials collection:

JOURNALS

APPALACHIA: JOURNAL OF THE APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION published bimonthly by the Appalachia Regional Commission, Washington, D.C.

AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PUBLIC HEALTH - published monthly by the American Public Health Association, Washington, D.C.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY JOURNAL - published biennially by Community Development Society, Columbia, Missouri.

WORKLIFE - published monthly by the U.S. Department of Labor. Employment and Training Administration, Washington, D.C.

RURAL SOCIOLOGY - published quarterly by the Rural Sociological Society, Auburn, Alabama.

PERIODICALS

AGENDA - published bimonthly by the National Council of LaRaza, Washington, D.C.

COUNTRY JOURNAL - published monthly by Country Journal, Inc., Brattleboro, Vermont.

ELF DIGEST - published monthly by the Emergency Land Fund, Atlanta, Georgia.

EXTENSION SERVICE REVIEW - published monthly by Extension Service/ USDA, Washington, D.C.

NATIONAL CENTER REPORTER - published monthly by the National Center for Community Action, Washington, D.C.

PLANNERS ROLL CALL - published bimonthly by Al Massoni Associates, Washington, D.C.

RURAL ELECTRIFICATION - published monthly by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Washington, D.C.

NEWSLETTERS

AG WORLD - published monthly by Ag World, Inc., St. Paul, Minnesota.

AREA DEVELOPMENT INTERCHANGE - published twice monthly by National Area Development Institute, Rockport, Texas.

CATHOLIC RURAL LIFE - published montly by the National Catholic Rural Life, Des Moines, Iowa.

COUNTRY WOMEN - published five times a year by Country Women, Albion, California.

LRC-W NEWSBRIEFS - published monthly by Lutheran Resources Commission, Washington, D.C.

RURAL AMERICA - published monthly by Rural America, Inc., Washington, D.C.

NEWSPAPERS

COUNTY NEWS - published weekly by the National Association of Counties, Washington, D.C.

GRIT - published weekly by Grit Publishing Company, Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

MAINE TIME - published weekly by the Maine Times, Inc., Topham, Maine.

MOUNTAIN EAGLE - published weekly by Thomas E. Gish, Tunnel Hill - Whitesburg, Letcher County, Kentucky.

NATIONAL LAND FOR PEOPLE - published monthly by National Land for People Inc., Fresno, California.

1.2.4 Issues Files

The library contains a collection of information in filing cabinets. These files, called Vertical Files, house documents that are too flimsy for shelf location, or are of a rather temporary value. The Issues File is arranged according to broad subject areas that are of prime concern to NRC's staff and individuals who seek information about rural affairs.

Under each subject heading one can expect to find newspaper clippings, Regulations from the FEDERAL REGISTER, debates from the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, major articles from journals, copies of bills and reports, pamphlets and other ephemeral material on rural development. The file is valuable for the over-view it can provide of up-to-date information on key issues and major congressional action, and the quick approach it offers to specific subjects.

(See Section 2.3.1 Congressional Document Collection, for details about location of certain congressional materials.)

1.2.5. Organization Files

In this same set of vertical files is a collection of information on national, state and local organizations having significant interest in rural affairs, files on major national foundations, and files on U.S. government departments and agencies involved in various aspects of rural development and policy-making.

1.2.6 Archives

The library has the responsibility of organizing and maintaining institutional publications for reference, as well as historical purposes. A special archives section was established as soon as the library got underway. This section is devoted to preserving documents prepared by the staff of the National Rural Center and its Information Clearinghouse. During the planning stages for NRC's establishment, many basic studies were prepared and those are included in the archives. This collection contains NRC publications (reports on conferences and projects), brochures, testimony by staff and board members, and articles that mention NRC and its programs.

1.3 The Congressional Document Collection

1.3.1 General Description

Early in the planning stages of the Rural Center, a decision was made that the library must contain a major collection of congressional documents and other special publications related to the enactment and implementation of federal programs. Although the Center is not a membership organization and does not lobby in the traditional meaning of that word, the emphasis on congressional documents is justified for two basic reasons:

First, it is necessary to the Center's mission to evaluate the need for and seek alternative policies and programs for rural areas and nonmetropolitan communities. To carry out that mission, it is essential that the staff have ready access to information about current laws and pending legislation, existing and proposed regulations, and reports on the implementation and effectiveness of existing federal programs.

Second, it is essential to the mission of the Clearinghouse. Public officials and key leaders in nonmetropolitan communities and towns must have information about provisions of existing laws, pending legislation, and federal regulations to make day-to-day decisions. Also, in many instances, excellent current information about rural matters is available primarily in congressional hearings records, committee prints, and reports by the General Accounting Office.

As can be seen from the preceding section on the general library collection, the congressional documents are completely integrated into the system. This special description is included to help portray fully the kinds of information and services available from the Clearinghouse and its library.

At the outset, a professional librarian (called the Legislative Reference Librarian at that time) was chiefly responsible for shaping the congressional collection and establishing the methods for its management and integration into the library system. Now, the Clearinghouse has a full-time Congressional Reference Specialist, who guides the continuous selection of documents and provides reference assistance to the general public and NRC's program staff specialists and the rural programs advisors. The library staff provides the usual services of acquiring, cataloging (when appropriate), filing, and shelving the documents--as well as assisting clients to find what they need.

The collection, like the general collection, is highly selective to reflect the program needs and interests of the Rural Center. Nonetheless, the subject areas encompassed are broad. There is strong emphasis on health care, rural development, public works, education, employment and manpower programs, social services and welfare reform, credit for rural enterprises, housing and community development, justice and legal services.

Most of the congressional collection is located in a special section of the library, and the materials are organized according to a system that is designed to make it easy for individuals to find documents by subject and number (for bills, reports, documents, public laws) or CIS (Congressional Information Service) accession number (for committee prints, hearings, and other selected documents).

Bills, reports, and public laws are kept in two places: in Vertical File (VF) drawers-by subject and bill number, and on shelves in pamphlet boxes according to numerical order. Hearings records, committee prints, and selected documents are cataloged and are shelved according to House or Senate committee, using the CIS numerical order system. An individual searching for a bill or committee report may find it in the Vertical File under a subject heading, or in pamphlet boxes according to numerical order by number. Clearly then, the library staff has created a flexible system for assuring that materials will be accessible to all users--one that is suited to a general library collection and another that is especially suitable for congressional documents.

1.3.2 Congressional Reference Tools

Reference tools for the congressional document collection are those that are necessary for daily ordering of documents, tracking legislation, and providing up-to-date summaries of legislation and newly enacted laws. Major sources are:

The CONGRESSIONAL MONITOR AND CONGRESSIONAL RECORD SCANNER, published by the Washington Monitor -- a daily service that lists committee hearings (current and scheduled) and bills; indexes statements made by senators and representatives; and provides a weekly review of reports and prints released by committees of the House and Senate.

The CONGRESSIONAL RECORD--scanned daily for special developments and debates on key issues (for filing in the Vertical Files) and the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD Index, published periodically.

The CONGRESSIONAL QUARTERLY -- weekly issues and annual volumes, devoted primarily to legislative activities.

The NATIONAL JOURNAL -- weekly, devoted primarily to executive-branch activities and special studies.

CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION SERVICE -- a monthly and annual service that includes the index and abstracts of congressional publications. (This CIS service has a widely-accepted numbering system for cataloging and shelving congressional documents, which we follow, and a numerical system for ordering microfiche copies of hearings and committee documents.)

THE COMMERCE CLEARINGHOUSE CONGRESSIONAL INDEX -- a loose-leaf weekly service that provides status reports on legislation.

The CONGRESSIONAL YELLOW BOOK -- a loose-leaf notebook, listing members of Congress and their staffs and committee members and their staffs (updated quarterly).

THE CONGRESSIONAL STAFF DIRECTORY -- a private publication by Charles R. Brownson; serving as a primary reference on members of Congress and their staff; includes brief biographies of U.S. Representatives and Senators.

THE DIGEST OF GENERAL PUBLIC BILLS -- a Congressional Research Service publication, providing summaries of bills on an irregular schedule and cumulatively.

U.S. CODE: CONGRESSIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE NEWS -- a West Publications service, issued monthly and is bound in volumes annually; carries public laws as enacted; provides legislative histories explaining the background history and purpose of each law.

Not strictly within the congressional collection, but managed by the Congressional Reference Specialist, are the daily FEDERAL REGISTER and the WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS.

1.3.3 Tracking and Locating Legislation

The Congressional Reference Specialist is responsible for selecting bills, hearings, records, committee prints and reports on a daily basis. Using the above-listed reference tools and the daily House Calendar, she makes selections that are pertinent to NRC's program and project activities, reference and technical assistance requests, and the library's goal of having a fairly comprehensive collection of contemporary information about issues of primary concern to rural America.

A legislative history sheet is made for each bill ordered. (See Exhibit 2, Part III). These sheets are kept in numerical-order binders by Congress, one for House bills, one for Senate bills. Using the Issues Vertical File, a subject heading is assigned to each legislative history sheet. All materials relating to a particular bill are then assigned the same subject, enabling retrieval by subject or by number.

As action is taken on a bill, dates, report numbers, hearings titles, debate, public law numbers and other references are noted on the sheet. A legislative history file folder is made for each legislative history sheet. For hearings and prints (or if bills, reports, and laws are bulky or extra copies are not available) a photocopy of the first page of the document is placed in the file. The files are arranged by subject in the Issues Vertical File and by bill number within each subject. Thus, one may use the Vertical File (Issues section) to scan a subject for an overview of most major bills -- including the news clippings and floor debates.

Those who want only the copy of a bill or committee report may find it on the shelves in the Congressional Document section. They are kept in numerical order in library file boxes, arranged according to the number of the congressional session (e.g., 94th 95th) and by House or Senate.

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The other main section of congressional documents contains the printed hearings records published by House and Senate committees, and the special prints (studies on special issues) prepared by those committees. House and Senate sections are separate, and all hearings and prints are arranged according to the responsible committee (e.g., House Committee on Ways and Means, Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.)

For those who wish help in locating documents, the Congressional Reference Specialist and all library staff members will provide assistance.

III 2 LAYOUT AND SPECIAL EQUIPMENT

When NRC began its operations, the library had about three hundred square feet of space, which was completely filled within twelve months. In preparation for moving to the present facility (August 1977) the library staff was assigned the responsibility of preliminary planning for the new space. That included designing the interior for maximum space utilization, budgeting, selecting furniture and equipment, and processing the bid documents. In designing and planning the space requirements for the new library, the four fundamental library functions considered were:

(1) housing the present collection,
(2) planning for future growth and expansion,
(3) providing adequate user-space (i.e., reading areas) and other user-facilities, and
(4) allocating work space for the library staff.

Library design specialists were consulted and the Head Librarian attended workshops on library layout and furniture at the annual meeting of the Special Libraries Association (New York City, Spring 1977).

We have included a drawing of the floor plan at the end of this section to give a visual idea of how the space is used. (See Exhibit 1, Part III) An open area of one thousand three hundred and twenty five (1325) square feet was considered adequate for a three-year growth plan. In addition, two small offices adjacent to the open area are provided for the Head Librarian and the Congressional Reference Specialist. Estimates of storage capacity in the expanded space are: (1) the thirty-three sections of book shelving can store four thousand volumes; (2) the seven sections of periodical display shelving can store two hundred and fifty periodical titles; (3) the filing cabinets can store one thousand four hundred reports; and (4) the table and two study carrels can accommodate six readers.

The main equipment and furniture for the new library includes:

A new work control station which includes a circulation desk
A desk/center for cataloguing
33 bracket-type steel bookshelves
7 ranges of periodical display racks
2 carrels and 1 reading table
4 lateral file cabinets
2 book trucks
A thirty-drawer card catalogue cabinet

Because the library is the center of all reference services, an electronic data terminal and a microfiche reader/printer are also located there.

Funding for the library equipment and furniture is provided by the National Rural Center. The money for staff salaries comes from the grant to NRC by the Office of Technical Assistance in the Economic Development Administration (Department of Commerce). Most of the money for the collection comes from the same source, but some is provided in connection with special projects that require a major acquisition of documents.

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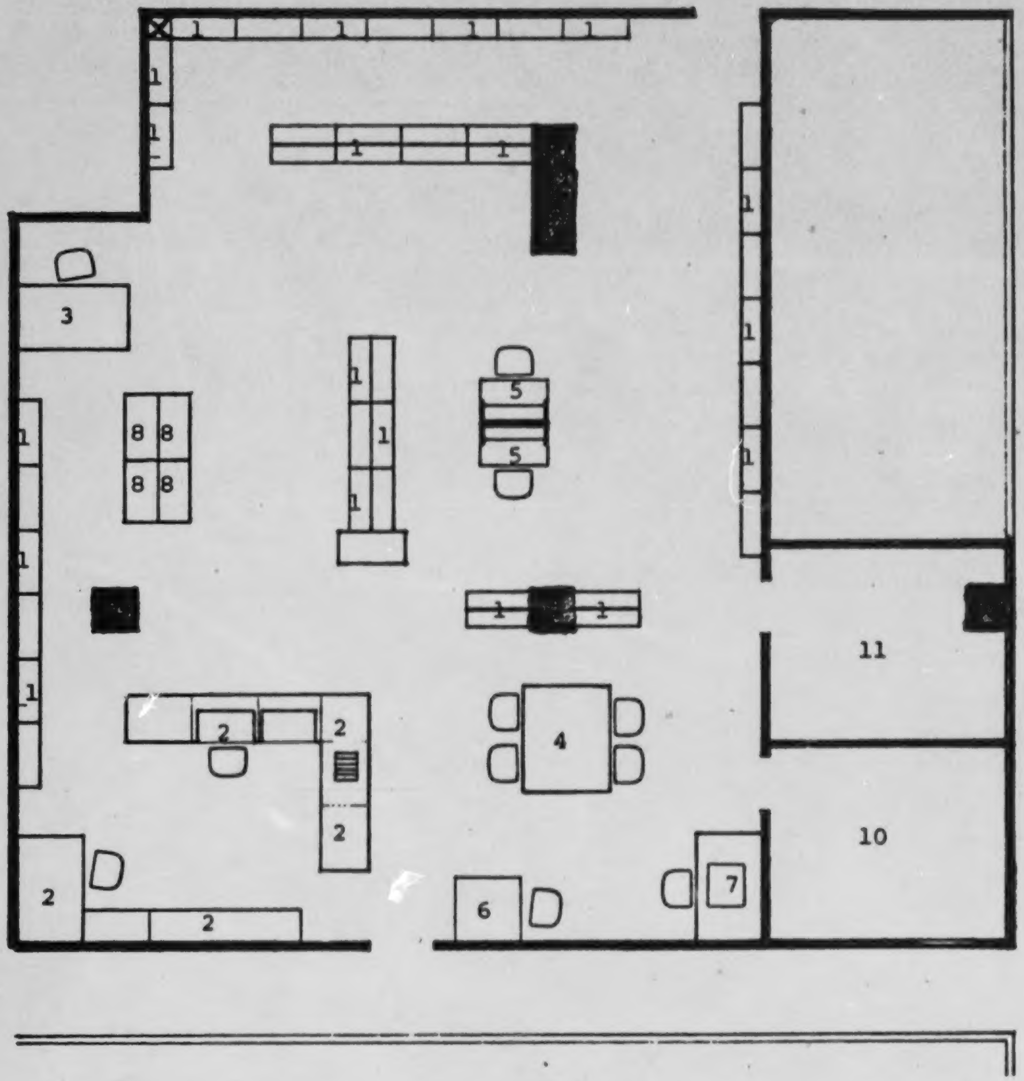
Floor Plan: Library · NRC's Information Clearinghouse, 1977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LEGEND:

1. Shelving
2. Work Control Station
3. Cataloger's Desk
4. Reading Table
5. Carrels
6. Micro-fiche Printer/Reader
7. Computer Terminal
8. Vertical Files
9. Card Catalog
10. Head Librarian's Office
11. Congressional Reference Specialist's

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Exhibit 2

SUBJECT: ________

BILL # ________ SPONSOR: ________

TITLE: ________

DATE INTRODUCED: ________ COMMITTEE: ________

DATE REFERRED: ________ SUBCOMMITTEE: ________

HEARINGS: TITLE: ________

____

DATE HELD: ________ CIS INDEX REF: ________

HR/S REPORT # & DATE: ________

FLOOR DEBATE & PASSAGE: ________

____

ACTION IN OTHER HOUSE DATE REFERRED: ________

COMMITTEE: ________ SUBCOMMITTEE: ________

HR/S REPORT # & DATE: ________

FLOOR DEBATE & PASSAGE: ________

____

VACATED IN LIEU OF BILL # ________ DATE: ________

CONFERENCE ACTION:

CONFERENCE REPORT # & DATE: ________

FLOOR DEBATE & PASSAGE: ________

FINAL STATUS:

PRESIDENTIAL ACTION: SIGNED: ________ VETOED: ________

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS: ________

PUBLIC LAW # & TITLE: ________

U.S.C.C.A.N.: ________

OTHER REFERENCES (e.g., Companion bills): ________

PART IV

COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION RETRIEVAL CAPABILITY

IV 1 General Description

IV 2 Detailed List of Computer Bases Used by The Clearinghouse

PART IV

COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION RETRIEVAL CAPABILITY

IV 1 General Description

The decision to initiate on-line literature searching was based on a need to improve the quality, speed, and scope of the reference and technical assistance services. In order to obtain access to a broad range of bibliograhic data bases, the Information Clearinghouse installed an electronic data terminal and now has access to three commercial on-line retrieval systems: Systems Development Corporation Search Service, Lockheed Information Systems, and General Electric Information Service. The on-line, interactive computer search service provides access to multidisciplinary files such as NTIS (National Technical Information Service), SOCIAL SCISEARCH; a number of discipline-oriented files such as PSYCHOLOGICAL ABSTRACTS, SOCIOLOGICAL ABSTRACTS, and ERIC; philanthropy files such as Foundation Directory and Foundation Grants Index; agriculturally-related files such as CRIS and AGRICOLA; and the federal programs file FAPRS (Federal Assistance Program Retrieval System).

Having such a service greatly strengthens the Clearinghouse's capability to give prompt and efficient service. The on-line computer service can quickly and accurately process a large volume of information. The service provides access to data files to which the library does not subscribe in hard copy, and the print-out or results of a search are available at the terminal if desired. More importantly, the system can accomplish in a few minutes what would take many hours to do by manual methods. It, therefore, greatly increases the Clearinghouse staff's productivity.

Three staff members are trained in computer information retrieval techniques. All three perform bibliographic searches: the Head Librarian does the major bibliographic searches; the Senior Rural Programs Advisor does searches for community programs, using FAPRS; and the Congressional Reference Specialist concentrates on congressional searches. The average cost per search is $12.00, even though many searches require going into more than one data base.

As was indicated under the reference section VI.1, copies of all print-outs from searches are kept in the library's vertical files by subject heading and are available for individuals doing research in the library.

IV 2 DETAILED LIST OF COMPUTER BASES USED BY THE CLEARINGHOUSE

Primary Computerized Information Retrieval Systems Used By NRIC In Delivery Of Rural Development Information

AMERICAN STATISTICS INDEX (ASI)

ASI indexes and abstracts all types of statistical publications of the U.S. Government: current periodicals, annuals, biennials, publications in series--special and irregular. Subject coverage includes all social, economic, demographic and selective scientific and technical data developed and published by the branches and agencies of the U.S. Government. Coverage is comprehensive for publications issued 1973 to date, and selective for publications issued from 1960 - 1972. Data file corresponds to the printed ASI Annuals and monthly supplements. Prepared by Congressional Information Service.

AGRICULTURE ON-LINE ACCESS (AGRICOLA)

File provides worldwide coverage of journals, government documents, reports, and literature in agriculture and related subject fields--including general agriculture and rural sociology, economics, consumer protection, human nutrition, animal science, veterinary medicine, forestry and plant-related areas, chemistry, natural resources, entomology, and agricultural engineering. Prepared by the U.S. National Agriculture Library.

COMPREHENSIVE DISSERTATION INDEX (CDI)

Indexes all dissertations accepted for academic doctoral degrees granted by U.S. education institutions and some foreign universities from 1861 to present. Data base corresponds to two printed products, Dissertation Abstracts International, and American Doctoral Dissertation. Prepared by University Microfilms International.

CONGRESSIONAL INFORMATION SERVICE INDEX (CIS INDEX)

Covers congressional publications from 1970 to date, and corresponds to the printed CIS Annual Index and monthly supplements. Publications included are hearings, committee prints, House and Senate Reports and Documents; special publications; Senate Executive Reports and Documents; and public laws. Reports and hearings on private bills, internal housekeeping matters, publications that are ceremonial in nature, and the Congressional Record are not included. Prepared by Congressional Information Service.

CRECORD

File provides comprehensive coverage of the Congressional Record, which is the official journal of the proceedings of the U.S. Congress. CRECORD contains references to bills and resolutions; amendments to bills and resolutions; committee and subcommittee reports; public laws; floor actions; schedules of committee and floor activities; executive communications; speeches, participation in debates and inserted materials by members of Congress. CRECORD cannot provide the voting record of any one member and only identifies pages in the Record for roll call votes. Coverage begins with the second session of the 94th Congress. Prepared by Capital Services, Inc.

CURRENT RESEARCH INFORMATION SYSTEM (CRIS)

A new file for agriculturally related research projects sponsored or conducted by USDA research agencies, agricultural experiment stations, and forestry schools. Subject coverage of CRIS encompasses the following disciplines: biological, physical, social and behavioral sciences related to agriculture in its broadest applications, including natural resource conservation and management; marketing and economics; food and nutrition; consumer health and safety; family life, housing, and rural development; environmental protection;

forestry; outdoor recreation, and community area and regional development. Entries cover the period from July 1974 to present.

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

ERIC provides a complete file on educational materials from the Educational Resources Information Center. Coverage includes reports and periodical literature in education and education-related areas; career education counseling; early childhood education, educational management, exceptional children; languages and linguistics; reading and communication skills; rural education and small schools; science, math and environmental education; social studies; social science education; teacher education and tests, measurements. ERIC comprises two machine-readable files which correspond to two separate printed products: Resources in Education and Current Index to Journals in Education. Entries cover the period from 1966 to present. Prepared by the National Institute of Education.

ENERGYLINE

Screens over 2,000 journals and research reports, surveys, hearings, irregular serials, monographs, and conference proceedings to provide comprehensive coverage of some 20 different energy-related areas: economics; U.S. policy and planning; international political and economic issues; R & D; resources and reserves; petroleum & natural gas resources; coal resources; unconventional resources; solar energy; fuel producation; fuel transport & storage; electric power; nuclear power; thermonuclear power; industrial, transporation, and residential consumption; and environmental impact. Entries cover the period from June 1971 to present and the supplier is the Environment Information Center, Inc.

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS RETRIEVAL SYSTEM (FAPRS)

File contains federal assistance programs applicable to community development. The system is operational for many programs of aid in eight major categories: community facilities, housing, business and industrial development, planning and technical assistance, employment, education, health, and social services. Based on the community's population, applicant entity, or location in SMSA or EDA/EDC or regional commission the program will provide names of federal assistance programs for which the community is eligible. The print-out is cross-referenced to the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance which provides summary descriptions of each program identified. File prepared initially by Rural Development Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture; human services were added in 1977 by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

FOUNDATION DIRECTORY

File provides description of over 2800 foundations which have assets of $1 million or more, or which make grants of $100,000 or more annually. Each foundation conforms to the general description of a "nongovernmental nonprofit organization, with funds and programs managed by its own trustees or directors, and established to maintain or aid social, educational, charitable, religious, or other activities serving the common welfare, primarily through the making of grants." Entries cover the current year. Prepared by the Foundation Center of New York City.

FOUNDATION GRANTS INDEX

File contains information on grants awarded by more than 400 major American philanthropic foundations. Subject coverage is primarily in the fields of education, health, welfare, science, international activities, humanities and religion. Grants to individuals and grants of less than $5,000 are not included. Entries cover the period from 1973 to present. Prepared by the Foundation Center of New York City.

INFORM

INFORM, a business information file, contains abstracts and citations from approximately 300 business management periodicals, such as Duns Review, Harvard Business Review. Entries cover the period from 1971 to present. Prepared by ABI, a division of Data Courier, Inc.

LIBCON

A multidisciplinary file of monographic literature and audiovisual materials, including MARC (Machine Readable Cataloging) records from the Library of Congress, as well as many more LC-cataloged items. Four different data bases are available. LIBCON/E, for English materials; LIBCON/F, for non-English materials; LIBCON/S, for current materials; and LIBCON/C, for card index file. Entries cover the period from 1965 to present. Prepared by Information Dynamics Corporation.

NATIONAL TECHNICAL INFORMATION SERVICE (NTIS)

NTIS is a broad and cross-disciplinary file of government-sponsored research and development reports, and other government analyses prepared by federal agencies, their contractors or grantees. The file includes materials from both the "hard and soft" sciences, including substantial material on technological applications, business procedures and regulatory matters. References covered are announced in the Weekly Government Abstracts, and the semimonthly Government Reports Announcements. Entries cover the period from 1970 to present. Prepared by National Technical Information Service, U.S. Department of Commerce.

POLLUTION

Corresponds in coverage to the printed Pollution Abstracts publications. Covers non-U.S. and domestic reports, journals, contracts and patents, symposia, and government documents in areas of pollution control and research: water, marine, land, noise and thermal pollution; pesticides; sewage and waste treatments; and legal documents. Entries cover the period from January 1970 to present. Prepared by Data Courier, Inc.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ABSTRACTS

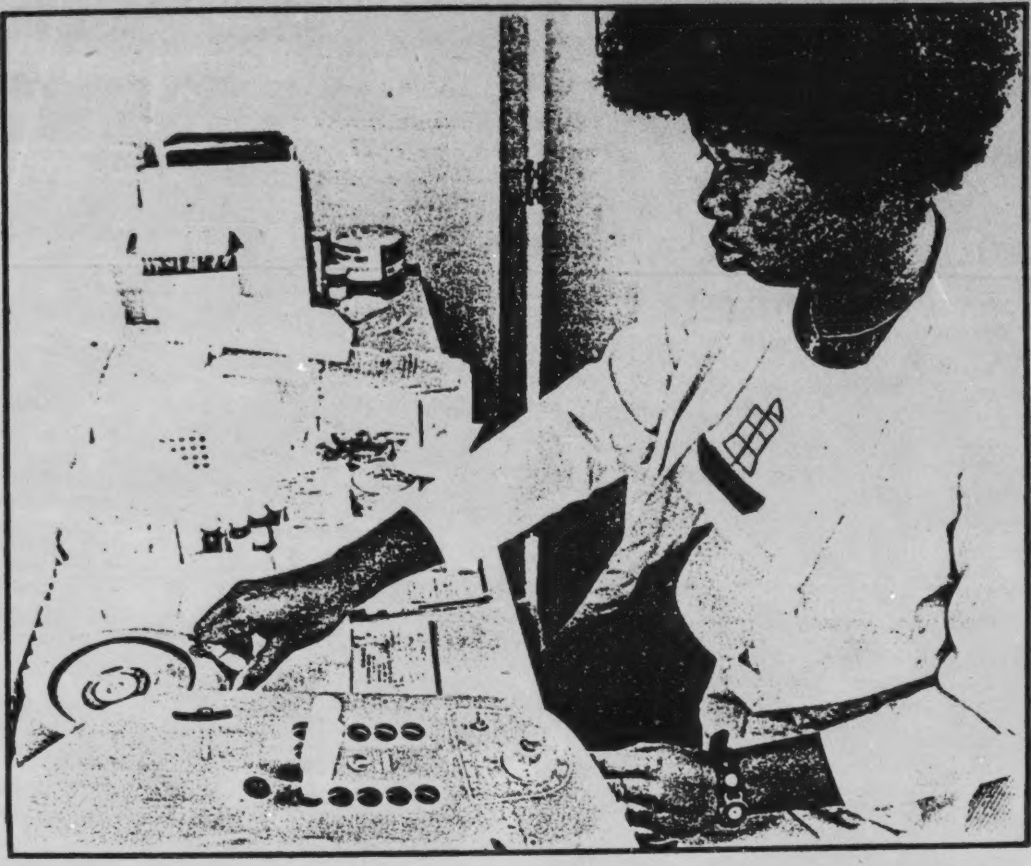
File provides coverage for all behavioral issues concerning human beings and animals. Coverage is not limited to individuals but includes such topics as the dynamics of groups and organizations, personnel practices, human factors and engineering. Corresponds in coverage to the printed Psychological Abstracts publication. Entries date back to 1967. Prepared by the American Psychological Association.

SMITHSONIAN SCIENCE INFORMATION EXCHANGE (SSIE)

Covers on-going and recently completed research in life, physical and social sciences -- both basic and applied research projects. Research in progress is included from over 1300 funding organizations, such as federal, state, and local governments; non-profit associations; colleges and universities; nonaffliliated investigators; and some foreign organizations and private industry. Entries cover the period of 1974 to present. Prepared by the Smithsonian Science Information Exchange.

SOCIAL SCISEARCH

A multidisciplinary file covering the worlds' most outstanding journals in social and behavioral sciences, including economics, educational research, law, management, marketing, library science, urban planning and development. Corresponds in coverage to the printed Social Science Citation Index. Entries cover the period from 1971 to present. Prepared by the Institute for Scientific Information.



PART V

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PART V TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES

V 1 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

One of the charges to the Rural Center's Information Clearinghouse under the terms of the grant from EDA was that we provide information to public officials and community leaders in rural areas and non-metropolitan town about federal economic and human development programs. We call this kind of service technical assistance to distinguish it from reference services. (See PART VI for description of reference services.) The Clearinghouse does not have housing development planners, water/sewer engineers or other technical experts in the usual sense of that word. Our expertise, rather, is in locating sources of technical advice or money provided by federal legislation; for example, programs for employment, health, small businesses, transportation, planning, recreation. We seek expertise and money from federal agency offices in Washington and in regional and area offices, as well as from quasi-public or private organizations (such as the Housing Assistance Council), and from foundations.

In general this is the way the staff provides technical assistance:

- It searches out all the federal programs and many of the private organizations that might be sources of funding or expert assistance;

- It contacts agency and organization personnel (in the D.C. area and in the field) to consult them about problems and to refer them directly to the inquirer.

- It refers some requests to organizations or federal agency offices charged directly with the responsibility for administering the programs needed.

- It follows up on the requests to determine whether the aid promised by public and/or private agencies was in fact delivered; whether or not it was satisfactory, what further action is needed, and so forth.

When appropriate, we use the electronic data terminal to develop a full list of federal programs of a specific kind for a community; for example, business and industrial development, community facilities, or employment. Using the data in the file known as FAPRS (the Federal Assistance Program Retrieval System), we get the list of programs for which a community might be eligible, analyze that list, select the programs that seem most suitable, and try to determine whether or not funding is left for the region or district in which the community is located. Unless the requestors are quite experienced in developing proposals for federal funding, we do not send the raw computer print-out, because the lists are generally too broad to be of practical help. More often, however, we use the CATALOGUE OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE for manual searches or our own special lists, developed through use of FAPRS or staff experience.

Having identified a source of money or technical help, we try then to locate the federal (or state) official who has charge of helping community officals prepare requests for assistance. The goal is to establish a direct contact between NRC's requestor and the nearest individual who might be likely to help. As unreasonable as it may seem, people in scattered rural communities do not have ready access to the federal representatives (or sometimes the state representatives) from whom they might expect guidance and support.

V 2 WHO IS SERVED AND HOW TO GAIN ACCESS

Any public official, community leader, organization, or individual in a rural area or nonmetropolitan community of 50,000 or under may seek assistance. Some rural communities are located within metropolitan areas and those, too, are eligible. There is no need to contact the Clearinghouse in the expectation that it or the National Rural Center can make grants for special projects or community programs. Assistance from the Clearinghouse is in the form of information about public and private agencies, organizations and individuals who can provide money or lend expertise.

To make a request, one may write or call the National Rural Center 202/ 331-0258 and ask for a Rural Programs Advisor. There are four individuals who work on technical assistance requests either full or part-time, so it is usually easy to talk with someone who can make notes on your needs. To save money, one may leave only a name and telephone number and a staff person will call back at the expense of the Clearinghouse. Whether a request comes by letter or phone, the staff member who will actually work on the request will call the individual to get an accurate picture of the needs and the community or organization. It is not necessary to write a major document to call upon us for aid.

V 3 EXAMPLES OF REQUESTS

3.1 Economic Development

Economic development is widely viewed as a means to combat stagnation and decline in rural areas, but there is no generally agreed-upon strategy for implementing rural economic development. Rural areas tend to have a disaproportionate share of the poor, lower wage levels, and lower median family income levels. Pockets of poverty center around certain regions of the country and among minority groups in particular. In addition, rural local economies are especially susceptible to structural economic changes, such as droughts and plant shut-downs.

At the federal level, the basic rural economic development assistance programs are administered by the Farmers Home Administration (soon to become the Farm and Rural Development Administration - Department of Agriculture) and the Economic Development Administration (Department of Commerce), with related programs administered by such agencies as the Community Services Administration, the Employment and Training Administration (Department of Labor), and the Small Business Administration (Department of Commerce). Since it is extremely difficult to understand how the programs of these various agencies interrelate and since applicant eligibility and funding requirements vary from program to program, many rural communities and organizations, although basically resource-poor, opt out of the federal assistance process altogether or become tied to one or another agency which may not be conducive to the development of a comprehensive economic development strategy.

Economic development requests included such areas as manpower training, small business, cooperative development and new-venture development as described below:

- A small, innovative business on the coast of North Carolina sought information on how to better capitalize its operation, which was seeking profitable ways to produce organic fertilizer from Atlantic Coast seaweed.

- An economic development support organization in Appalachian Kentucky sought information on technical assistance resources for a small furniture factory in East Tennessee which was reproducing authentic period furniture.

- A minority business enterprise in South Carolina sought a grant for start-up funding for an egg factory.

- A state office in Minnesota sought ways in which marginal farmers impacted by the drought could enter into part-time public service employment or in some way supplement their off-farm income.

- Two community development corporations in Minnesota sought information: one wanted to know of foundations supporting community-based economic development activities; the other sought information on venture funds for small businesses in rural areas.

- A manpower training center for natural resource management in northern California sought leads to fund a model youth conservation and community improvement camp to provide training for leaders of Youth Conservation Corps activities and to provide guidance for program design and operation for such job training efforts.

- A settlement house located in a mining village of West Virginia sought information on youth employment programs.

It appears that the Information Center has played a constructive role in linking requestors with sources of technical assistance in the field of economic development. One individual responded, "What a fantastic letter you sent - and what really great resources you have shared with us - THANK YOU!!"

It is less clear how effective we have been in linking requestors with financial assistance. A number of the planned programs were quite innovative and carried substantial price tags, requiring of funding from several federal programs. Most of the requestors seeking financial assistance sought grant funds for their economic development activities, and there is a relative paucity of federal grants for economic development in rural areas, although the prospects for future funding appear bright. In addition, most of the requestors were nonprofit organizations, and it is becoming increasingly difficult for nongovernmental organizations to break into the federal funding pattern.

3.2 Housing

The National Housing Act of 1949 set as its goal, a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American. The total U.S. housing picture has improved greatly since that goal was set, non-metropolitan areas having improved faster than urban areas. According to the Economic Research Service Report, "25 Years of Housing Progress in Rural America", the proportion of substandard* units in non-metro areas declined from 59 percent in 1950 to 8 percent in 1975.

Despite this marked improvement, there were nearly 2 million families living in substandard housing in 1975. That represents approximately half of all the occupied substandard housing in the nation. The major problem is that many people in rural areas cannot afford to purchase decent housing. Obviously, there is a very important opportunity for creating new jobs in connection with construction of new houses and renovation of existing housing in rural areas.

The following examples of assistance requests in the area of housing illustrate the variety of housing problems in rural areas and non-metropolitan communities.

- Several communities were interested in Section 8 rural rental housing programs, provided in the 1974 Housing and Urban Development Act (small towns in Lousiana and California, for example).
- A regional council in Montana needed information to prepare a comprehensive housing plan.

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*(The Bureau of Census definition of substandard housing: units lacking some or all plumbing or units that are overcrowded, meaning more than one person per room.)

- A planning commission in New Hampshire wanted to establish a community land trust for housing, as well as a cooperative housing project.
- A small town in Wisconsin with a population of 1200, needed funding to construct a home for the aged.
- A housing development corporation in Texas wanted help with getting approval for a rural housing and training program.
- A community action agency in Kentucky was preparing a housing counseling project and needed help in refining a job description for housing counselor.
- A small town in Arkansas was trying to set up a housing authority to deal with the acute housing shortage brought on by a boom in industrialization.
- A community action agency in Maryland wanted to establish a Housing Development Corporation and needed funding.

The Information Clearinghouse provided a wealth of information to a number of communities about housing programs and possible funding sources. The Clearinghouse regularly refers requesting communities to the Housing Assistance Council and local Farmers Home Administration officials, and seeks to establish direct contact between the two parties.

In follow-up contacts with requestors, we learned, for example, that the Texas Housing Development Corporation applied for a $2,000,000 construction and training loan. The loan was not granted by a federal agency. However, the proposal generated other state and local funding.

3.3 Water/Sewer

Not only is there a need to improve the condition of rural housing, there is also a need for new or improved water and waste disposal facilities. Many rural communities lack the revenue to support elaborate or central water and sewer systems. It is often difficult even to find the required matching funds for grants made by the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA). Communities with little revenue may be able to get a loan, but the expense and delays involved in that process often deter them from applying. Another obstacle is that it is very hard to get on the Environmental Protection Agency's state priority list, which is the basis for EPA grants. EPA, however, is emphasizing a less expensive non-central water and sewer system technology and providing good technical assistance. The Farmers Home Administration, on the other hand, emphasizes a more expensive central system approach to water and sewer technology, and seems reluctant to fund non-central systems.

Examples of assistance requests on water and sewer issues include the following:

- A town in Pennsylvania was experiencing an excess surface water level, causing septic effluent surfacing. It wanted technical assistance for help in developing practical alternatives to remedy the problem.

- A small community in Alabama needed federal money to install a sewerage system.

- A planning commission in Georgia needed funds to purchase a privately-owned water works system.

- An Iowa town needed funds to improve the water system, as well as all the related facilities.

- A Kansas community wanted information on funding sources for a water and sewer system.

- The extension service in Oregon wanted funds to complete an area-wide water distribution system.

- An association in New Mexico wanted someone to help monitor its water system to insure that the system provided the services expected.

The Clearinghouse often refers water and sewer requestors to the Environmental Protection Agency or to their local officials in the Farmers Home Administration for information on programs and application procedures, and to the National Demonstration Water Project for technical assistance. Several of the water and sewer requests received by the Clearinghouse were funded:

- A community in Alabama received $16,582 from the Environmental Protection Agency to install a sewerage system.

- A small town in Kansas received $117,500 from the Farmers Home Administration to install a water and sewer system. However, the estimated cost of the projects is $598,000, and the town cannot come up with the required $470,500 in matching funds. There is a chance, therefore, that the money will be returned to Farmers Home.

- An Iowa community received a $2.4 million loan and a $2.4 million grant from the Farmers Home Administration to improve its water system and related facilities.

3.4 Community Centers

Several federal programs make funds available for community centers, but most are categorical programs that provide funds for specific groups, i.e., senior citizens, youth or the handicapped. Rural areas and non-metropolitan communities rarely have sufficient population to justify the need for separate centers to serve particular population groups. There is little likelihood that there will ever be enough federal or local monies to provide for separate service centers, which may not be a desirable goal in any case. The term "community center" implies service to the community as a whole, with the natural population configuration of young, middle-aged, elderly, and handicapped people. We have great difficulties in providing leads to funding that might offer realistic opportunities in rural areas and small non-metropolitan communities. The major sources of money are Title V of the Older American Act, the Community Development Block Grant program, FmHA's Community Facility Loan program, and the Public Works program.

Title V of the Older American Act may be used to finance up to 75% of the cost of acquisition, alteration, or renovation of facilities that will serve as multipurpose senior centers. Grants are awarded to those local governments and agencies that have the capacity to operate centers that serve as focal points in the community, delivering a wide range of services (i.e., health, recreation, social etc.), but only for elderly people.

Funding for community centers is one of the activities permitted under the Community Development Block Grant Program, but most small communities do not receive Community Development Block Grant funds. Receipt of any funds under that program is contingent upon development of a long-range housing and land use plan, along with community development programs that serve the most disadvantaged segment of the community. Here again, it is unrealistic to think that small communities will find it desirable or suitable to provide community centers just for an economically disadvantaged segment of the population.

Examples of assistance requests in the area of community centers:

- A small city in Illinois needed funds to construct or purchase suitable quarters for a multipurpose center for senior citizens. The center would be used for youth activities as well.

- A small community in Missouri needed funds to construct a community center or municipal building, such as a civic center. (We advised that a building which serves a dual purpose should be considered.)

- A small community in the coal mining area of Kentucky requested help in funding a program under which an existing facility could be used as a community center for recreation, crafts, etc. by young and elderly people alike. The basic need was for funds for staff to operate the program.

The Information Clearinghouse has been able to supply information regarding the various sources of funding. However, to date, none of our requestors have received any funding.

3.5 Health

Finding ways to improve the health care systems in rural communities is a major concern of many rural community leaders requesting assistance from the Information Clearinghouse. Lack of appropriate health-care facilities, shortage of medical personnel, and provision of special health-care services for certain segments of the rural population have been the most common problems identified in these requests. The following examples of requests that have been received during the last year illustrate the variety of health related problems that rural communities are attempting to address.

- A health clinic in West Virginia that had been funded by HEW to expand and improve its facilities was experiencing severe cash flow problems because government checks to pay the contractor were (by law) continually delayed. Assistance was sought to find a way to work out a solution to the problem.

- A primary care group practice in rural western Pennsylvania wanted information on grantsmanship techniques and methods, and community development techniques geared to developing rural community-based boards of directors and community education programs.

- Rural health centers or clinics in Vermont, Georgia, and Tennessee wanted help in identifying sources of federal and private funds to cover acquisition, construction, start-up, or operating expenses.

- An official from an economic development district in California wanted to know how to secure funding under HEW's Rural Health Initiatives program, to alleviate a physician shortage in a 4-county area.

- Family planning associations serving rural areas in Tennessee and Florida requested information on funding available for health education programs related to family planning and maternal and child health care.

- A nonprofit mental health center in North Dakota sought leads to private funds for an innovative project that would take a "wholistic approach to mental health by combining medical, psychological and spiritual services.

- A mobile speech and hearing program in southern Illinois wanted information about federal and private funding sources for a program to meet the needs of a primarily rural 30-county area.

For the most part, the Clearinghouse staff has been successful in identifying federal and private sources of financial and technical assistance for health care programs in rural areas. Because sources are so few in number, it has been more difficult to identify additional or alternative sources for those communities or groups already aware of, or ineligible for, the major sources of federal funds, such as HEW's Rural Health Initiative program. In some program areas, such as health education, it has been virtually impossible to identify any federal or private assistance programs that might provide funds.

3.6 Recreation

The Information Center received several requests for assistance in identifying possible funding sources for community recreational needs. Most of the requestors resided in communities of populations under 1,000 and, therefore, lack the resources to provide recreational opportunities without outside assistance. There was a general indication from the requestors that this unfulfilled need was detrimental to the development of the youth of their communities.

Illustrative requests follow:

- A mayor of a small town in Arkansas requested information on possible funds to replace playground equipment for one park and to develop another one of greater size.
- A minister who served as a town councilman in another small community in Arkansas requested information on funding possibilities for playgrounds, as well as for a recreation coordination. He cited the lack of constructive alternatives for the town's youth.
- A multicounty planning organization in Georgia sought leads for funding assistance for a boat marina needed to fulfill the increasing demand for recreation brought by tourism.
- A community improvement group in North Carolina sought information on funding possibilities for recreation on U.S. Forest Land for low-income residents of the area.

3.7 Planning and Growth Management

A few years ago the term "planning" was anathema to many people in rural areas and smaller communities. If the requests received by the Clearinghouse are true indicators, that is no longer true. Public officials and private-sector community leaders alike recognize that "planning" is a skill they must master if they are to have a chance to make their own decisions about the kinds of communities they want. The general practice has been that smaller communities have been caught in the consequences of planning by nearby large towns and cities, or by regional agencies. Smaller communities have been left out of the process.

The 1972 Rural Development Act authorized $10,000,000 for rural development planning grants; but no money was appropriated until 1977, when $5,000,000 was agreed upon. As we go to press, the regulations to control its use are still in process. In the interim, non-metropolitan communities have not been totally without funds for planning. In fact, money and aid is available from a wide variety of sources including the following: the HUD 701 Comprehensive Planning Assistance Program (of which very little has gone to those areas); the Section 208 areawide waste management program-about the only real planning money in rural areas, but having a limited purpose; and the Appalachian Regional Commission's Local Development District Assistance Works Act all provide some assistance with planning--funds and technical assistance.

There are river basin commissions, state and areawide planning commissions, soil conservation districts and Resources Conservation and Development Areas, economic development districts, health planning areas, and so forth--all sorts of geographically-designated commissions and areas related to planning functions for management of a variety of environmental and other programs. Those laws, commissions and special-purpose geographic areas are useful and perhaps necessary. The list makes it sound as though a lot more is happening than is true. And the overlapping jurisdictions and confusion about what government has decision-making power over plans that are made all add up to great difficulties for rural areas and non-metropolitan communities.

That rural communities recognize the need of support for planning--funds and technical assistance--is clearly illustrated in the following sample list of requests to the Clearinghouse:

- A citizen in Wyoming sought resources that could help the community plan for energy development in order to prevent the boom and bust cycle that was occuring already in nearby communities.

- A township clerk in rural Michigan needed leads to sources of technical assistance and information to help with planning for a town that has grown 73% since 1970.

- The director for a long-range planning program in Washington state needed informtion and leads to assistance for further planning.

- A community that is being impacted by construction of a nuclear power plant wanted technical assistance in developing a zoning structure and other mechanisms to help the community cope. (701 and Community Development Block grant sources had been explored already and not found suitable.)

- A rural community in Ohio wanted funds to plan for the restoration of an area.

- A native American community in Louisiana wanted funds to enable it to do some comprehensive planning for a variety of programs to meet its needs.

- A small community in California wanted funds to employ a planner/ engineer to develop a comprehensive street plan.

- A New England "village" that is on the edge of urbanization wanted leads to sources of funding to make plans for handling immediate growth. As described, "the village is neither fish nor fowl to funding sources, ... and is heavily bonded, which makes it hard to find even token funds." (Had an earlier planning grant and continues to seek approval for two-step regional planning with two other communities.)

- An Alabama community wanted planning funds for developing programs for recreation and area economic development.

- Several communities in Nebraska sought funds to help with planning for proposed major expansion in railroads to accommodate increased coal hauling -an economic development they need and want, but one which they want to manage so as to protect a valued life-style.

Many individuals seeking technical or financial assistance for planning purposes also want information about what other communities are doing and/or bibliographies or guides to successful planning. The four regional rural development centers have helped provide guidelines and additional leads to assistance. We anticipate many requests from area planning commissions and communities wanting to secure some of the $5,000,000 appropriated for rural development planning grants.

3.8 Fire Protection

The threat of fire is one of the most frightening thoughts a family can have. This fear is intensified in rural communities where houses are sparsely situated, the water supply is inadequate, and basic fire fighting equipment is often non-existent.

Little national interest has been shown in fire protection in rural areas. The major thrust of federal policy has been to prevent forest fires, which is evident in the fact that most of the fire protection assistance programs fall under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Forest Service.

Examples of assistance requests for fire protection follow:

- A small rural town in Vermont wanted to obtain financing for a Tone Alert Alarm System, for quick responses to fires and emergencies. This town is presently servicing two other rural communities.

- A rural planning commission in Georgia needed to purchase fire-fighting equipment for the various towns it services.

- A small community in Wisconsin needed funds to finance establishment and operation of a rural fire department.

The Information Clearinghouse has supplied information as to the available sources of funding; i.e., Farmers Home Administration, U.S. Forest Service.

Much progress has been made in protecting forest and range lands from fire, and beginning in 1972, Title IV of the Rural Development Act authorized rural community fire protection loans and grants. These grants can be made for up to 50% of the cost for training or equipment, but they cannot be used for capital or operating costs -- a hardship to communities with little revenue for either kind of expense. Since 1973, the Farmers Home Administration has made loans of $28 million to small communities for public safety facilities, including structures and equipment. In 1975 Congress appropriated $3.5 million to fund Title IV, and the Forest Service created the Rural Community Fire Protection Program (RCFP).

In addition to the Title IV programs, there are other options open to rural communities. For example, a rural planning commission in Georgia was able to obtain a fire truck and other equipment from the General Services Administration's Federal Surplus Property Program.

3.9 Legal Assistance

Legal and justice needs are generally perceived by the rural poor as directly related to the broader dimensions of their social and economic well-being. In seeking "a bigger bang for the bucks", the former Office of Economic Opportunity concentrated much of its legal assistance resources in urban areas. Nevertheless, the Legal Services Corporation, with a mandate to provide minimum access to legal services to the 16 million indigent Americans not presently served and with a substantial boost in funding, has an unique opportunity to address the legal and justice needs of the poor in rural areas. Examples of requests follow:

- two community action agencies, one in North Carolina and one in Indiana, sought information on funding possibilities to establish legal assistance for the poor people served by the agencies.
- A community development group in Hawaii sought assistance for training of paralegals for low-income people and for funds to acquire a law library.

In one instance, it was reported that the rural area was presently served by the expansion of an existing legal services organization, and another requestor related that no funds would be available from the state legal aid organization until January 1, 1978.

The Legal Services Corporation is the basic funding source for legal assistance, but other federal programs also assist in providing paralegals or temporary assistance such as Title XX Social Services, CETA, VISTA, and programs administered by the Administration on Aging. In addition, some foundations have an expressed interest in legal assistance.

3.10 Cultural Promotion and Preservation

Rural Americans have a rich and diverse cultural heritage. There appears to be a cultural renaissance in America's small towns and rural areas, as witnessed by the rapid rise of craft cooperatives, art groups, performing troupes, etc. It is a sad irony, however, that the improvement in rural conditions sometimes brings with it the gradual erosion of cultural values and expression. The richness of rural culture is indicated by the variety of requests received by the Information Clearinghouse:

- A migrant farm-worker organization in Florida sought assistance for a program of cultural enrichment for migrant farm-worker children.

- A nonprofit organization in a mining town of Kentucky sought operational support for a program to preserve Appalachian culture through television documentaries, recordings of traditional folk music, and presentations to Appalachian schoolchildren.

- An institute in North Carolina sought assistance for support of a series of workshops for Southern journalists as well as for the editing, production, and promotion of a column appearing in numerous Southern newspapers, mostly rural, focusing on the particular contributions of Southern culture and living.

- A community activist in South Dakota sought funds for a melon festival as well as for arts and crafts shows, historical programs, and presentations of Indian culture.

- An institute in Arkansas sought to preserve the cultural heritage of the people in the Ozarks.

- Two requests were received for funding possibilities for historical outdoor dramas in rural areas of Tennessee and North Carolina.

- Several requests were received for funding possibilities for craft training programs in Appalachia, including one from a craft cooperative in Kentucky which sought funds to seek out and document the development of traditional crafts and to train young people to make and market models of these indigenous crafts to help provide employment opportunities, as well as to preserve the crafts in their original form.

The National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities is the basic funding source at the federal level for such programs. However, this is an area in which private foundations are also heavily involved, and substantial research on this source of assistance has been carried out by the Information Clearinghouse staff. The need for good and comprehensive information on funding possibilities among foundations for certain areas of concern to rural citizens has been recognized by the Clearinghouse and is being addressed through the development of a directory of private assistance resources for rural areas.

The provision of information on foundation assistance to rural organizations seeking to promote cultural activities or most any other activity is quite difficult. Priorities of foundations change; criteria for funding are not always clear; foundation dollars are limited; and it is difficult often times to break into the cycle of a particular foundation's funding without personal contacts.

For the most part, requestors have responded that the information provided on foundation funding was helpful and some expressed hope that funding would be forthcoming. In one instance, however, an organization expected more than information and wanted personalized contacts with foundation officials as well. The frustration of obtaining foundation assistance was expressed by a North Carolina outdoor drama promoter, who had written ten carefully-researched and well-prepared grant proposals or letters of inquiry:

> "One foundation which funds only professional non-profit theater, does not fund seasonal professional non-profit theater...One foundation which funds arts organizations in North Carolina does not fund theaters and one which does fund theaters, does not fund outdoor dramas. Another foundation will fund North Carolina professional, non-profit, seasonal, outdoor drama, but only those who pay union scale. As chance would have it, we don't pay union scale."

3.11 Transportation

Transportation has been identified as a major priority by a number of the rural leaders using sources of the Information Clearinghouse. Aside from the more obvious problem of isolation that many smaller communities and outlying areas are presented with, a number of rural citizens suffer from the lack [illegible] mobility due to age, poverty, and disabilities. Without alternatives to the private automobile, a number of rural citizens are unable to take advantage of the basic amenities and services which most Americans take for granted.

Some examples of the assistance requests that we have had in the field of transportation include:

- A rural community of 2,000 in California, located 20 miles from the nearest business center, is trying to organize a transportation program that will allow all of its citizens an opportunity to enjoy the health, educational, shopping, and cultural opportunities outside the community. Financial assistance was sought.

- A state office in Colorado wanted leads of rural transportation experts to invite to a state conference and also wanted information on federal funds available for rural transportation.

- A conference organizer of a federal regional office of ACTION wanted information on possible resource people to discuss rural transportation programs and options.

- A social service network in rural Maine sought information on how to best manage a small transportation system and to coordinate existing transportation services as well as funds for such a coordinator.

- Community action agencies in Louisiana and Nebraska sought information on funding possibilities for their transportation services.

- An Appalachian Kentucky organization serving a multicounty area sought information on how to better manage and service the existing fleet of vehicles.

The Clearinghouse has been quite successful in providing information on rural transportation to those requesting assistance and in linking these people with existing sources of technical assistance as reflected in the following comment:

"My head is bursting with information about rural transit systems, and to think that a month ago I knew darn near nothing. Thanks to you I have found a wealth of material."

Unfortunately, we have been less effective in helping those interested in rural transportation locate sources of financial assistance. In some cases, assistance was found anyway from the Community Services Administration, local municipalities or the Department of Labor, but for the most part there is a lack of federal financial assistance for operational support in the rural transit field. While urban areas enjoy the flexibility of using Urban Mass Transit Administration monies for either capital or operational expenses, communities under 50,000 are unable to use UMTA funds for operating expenses. In many rural areas certain client groups, such as the elderly or the poor are adequately served, but there is no coordinated, comprehensive system that will serve all of the population for a variety of mobility purposes. Without operational support it is often difficult to develop a system that will use existing vehicles in a wise fashion and will provide for adequate maintenance and repair.

3.11 Profile of Assistance Request and Response

This summary of work on a request is submitted to give an idea of the approaches used by the Clearinghouse and the time required to respond to many requests.

A concerned citizen in a small town in Oregon contacted the Information Clearinghouse for leads to funding a sewer system. The town, while surrounded by wealthy wheat farmers, is basically resource-poor and elderly. The town has potential for substantial growth because of a model school system. Numerous requests for housing permits have been turned down, nevertheless, due to a determination by the state's department of environmental quality that the town could not support additional housing without wastewater treatment improvement.

The first task of the Information Clearinghouse was to provide basic information on federal funding possibilities, including the Farmers Home

Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Economic Administration's public works grants, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant program. In addition, the requestor was given the names and addresses of sources of information on sewer systems for small communities. The state director of the Farmers Home Administration was contacted by the Clearinghouse staff, as were the regional offices of the other agencies mentioned.

The requestor communicated with the Clearinghouse a few weeks later, relating that he had discovered that, as a small town, his community received low priority for Environmental Protection Agency funds and that it was unlikely that his community would be considered for several years. Since EPA's grants are at a higher matching ratio than Farmers Home grants (up to 75%, as opposed to 50%), he felt that the community should not apply for Farmers Home funding. He was interested in ways that his community could push its way up higher on the state's priority list for EPA funds.

The Clearinghouse staff contacted the Housing Assistance Council and the National Demonstration Water project for advice, and we learned that EPA had just held a conference on wastewater treatment for small communities in which intermediate technologies were emphasized. Aside from providing contacts of experts at EPA, these non-governmental organizations provided the name of a municipal engineer in Oregon who had spoken at the conference about a relatively inexpensive sewer system developed for his community.

The Environmental Protection Agency was contacted, and staff spoke with one of the organizers of the conference who is an expert on intermediate sewer technologies. He discussed the regional seminars that EPA was holding for smaller communities on wastewater treatment and suggested that materials from EPA's Environmental Research Center in Cincinatti be ordered. These documents were ordered for the National Rural Center library, and a set was requested for the requestor in Oregon as well.

When last contacted, the requestor expressed his appreciation for the Information provided and stated that the materials sent on non-central technologies were being forwarded to a consulting engineer who was also planning to contact the Oregon engineer who was mentioned earlier. While it was originally thought by the Clearinghouse staff that the community would be able to utilize an intermediate technology that could significantly cut down costs and thus make Farmers Home funding more feasible, the community opted instead to wait for favorable consideration on the state's priority list for EPA funding.

This profile illustrates the basic approach to answering requests for financial assistance information. We seek to provide information on federal and private assistance sources, as well as references to experts in the field who can be of additional help to communities. The Information Clearinghouse does not stock supplies of documents to send to requestors. The staff usually refers requestors to manuals or publications of interest or will ask federal or private information officers to send free brochures or materials. We often duplicate special materials for individuals and/or communities who would otherwise find it difficult to get the information they need. The basic thrust of our service is to provide information that will enable communities to make choices wisely.

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PART VI

REFERENCE SERVICES

VI 1 Basic Description

VI 2 Who Is Served And How To Make A Request

VI 3 Examples of Reference Requests

PART VI

REFERENCE SERVICES

VI 1 BASIC DESCRIPTION

The organization and development of the library's collection is dominated by the need to provide efficient and effective reference service. The primary function of the Clearinghouse's reference service is to provide information and bibliographies on specific subjects upon request. We do not collect or mail out quantities of brochures or monographs.

For descriptive purposes, reference service may be grouped into five primary and three auxiliary categories. Primary services consist of those responsibilities essentially informational in character. Auxiliary services are those related to supporting the primary reference function.

Primary Services

1. Ready reference. This is simply the provision of information in response to specific requests, and a large percentage of the reference requests are in this category. Usually the information or answers can be found in the library collection or can be supplied by making a quick telephone call. Requests in this category range from supplying an actual copy of the latest CETA regulation to locating a working definition for the term agribusiness.

2. Literature Searching. This process is performed by carefully checking appropriate sources, and assembling the relevant references to sources where the information is found. Examples of requests that have required literature searches are: locating recent information on the economy-of-size in farming and identifying public works employment outreach programs for the past five years.

3. Preparation of Bibliographies. Bibliographies are most frequently compiled by conducting a computerized search of one or more appropriate data files, and in some instances that is the first step in performing a literature search. When possible, the staff evaluates the computerized printouts of bibliographies and abstracts to help the requestor find the most important titles.

Copies of all the bibliographic search printouts are kept in the library's vertical files for use by individuals who come to the library.

4. Scanning and referring information. Periodicals, technical reports, books and other materials are examined routinely by the librarian and are brought to the attention of individuals on the staff who would be interested or have a need to know about the developments reported.

5. Legislative tracking and reference assistance. As noted in the section on the Congressional Collection, status sheets are kept on all legislation on hand in the library. There is a heavy demand for information about pending and proposed legislation, as well as for old laws and legislative histories. The Congressional Reference Specialist is in charge of this kind of reference service, and is able to provide computer searches where appropriate.

Auxiliary Services

1. Cataloging. The main purpose of cataloging is to assist users in finding specific information easily and to aid librarians in answering reference questions. Cataloging, therefore, is vital to the library's reference services. The system for cataloging provides access to materials in the collection by subject and personal author, title, governmental agency, private organization and/or association; e.g., Brookings Institution or the Northeast Center for Rural Development.

Special care is taken in the selection of subject headings and cross-references, in order to provide terms and references that are specific and pertinent to the issues, conditions, and developments in contemporary rural society. The guiding criterion for subject selection is the particular interest of the library's users - rural specialists, the general public, and NRC's staff.

2. Interlibrary loan. The subject limitation of the library's collection often necessitates borrowing needed materials from outside sources. NRC's library provides a reciprocal service to libraries that comply with the American Library Association's interlibrary loan procedures.

3. Preparation of special indexes. Many of the library's periodicals are not indexed in the standard library sources, or the lag time is too great to be considered current. The staff now indexes and maintains a file of major articles on rural development issues. This index covers major serial titles in our collection.

VI. 2 WHO IS SERVED AND HOW TO MAKE A REQUEST

Eligibility for reference assistance differs slightly from that for technical assistance. We limit technical assistance to people in rural areas and communities and towns of up to 50,000 in population, more generally those in the 25,000 or less range. But with regard to reference assistance, we will try to help anyone who is concerned about rural affairs anywhere in the nation. For example, we have assisted foundation officers in New York City who need information about particular problems in rural areas as the basis for providing grants to rural organizations for special projects. Most requests come, however, from leaders and public officials in small communities; from organizations seeking new ways to promote better jobs, health, or education in their areas; and from professors in small colleges that do not have extensive libraries.

So, in a word, anyone who is interested in or working with people who live in rural areas and nonmetropolitan communities may request reference assistance.

To make a request, all that is needed is to write or telephone the National Rural Center (202) 331-0258 and indicate a need for reference services. When telephoning, one should indicate whether the question relates to general information, congressional action or program regulations. With that information we can refer requestors directly to the individual most likely to be able to help. If calling from long distance, one may leave name, telephone, subject matter with whoever answers, and a Clearinghouse staff member will return the call at NRC's expense to get all the details. When individuals write in to the Clearinghouse for assistance, a staff member will usually call to be certain about the information being sought.

It is important to keep in mind that we do not stock materials for mailing out to individuals. When appropriate, we call federal or private agencies, requesting that they send materials.

VI 3 EXAMPLES OF REFERENCE REQUESTS

The Clearinghouse has had requests for reference information and computerized bibliographic searches from 30 states and a wide variety of individuals. A few examples will provide some idea of the range of those requests:

> A research director wanted a description of all the terms used to define rural.
>
> A foundation officer requested information about public lands in the United States, with particular emphasis on the extent and location of public lands that might have potential for economic development in rural areas.
>
> A reporter wanted information about small towns in Michigan that have experienced significant growth in the last five to six years.
>
> A manpower project director needed information about the regulations and application requirements for Title III Migrant Worker programs under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA).
>
> An agricultural extension agent wanted statistics on the amount of agricultural land being consumed by urban development and a bibliographic search on land use as it relates to agricultural problems in general.
>
> A community resource development official needed information that would indicate the cost-benefit analysis of converting rural agricultural land into use for housing, including the income potential of agricultural use versus housing development.
>
> A university professor wanted a bibliography of reports about citizen involvement in rural economic development.

A community development corporation wanted detailed information about welfare costs and practices in Mississippi, the number of people participating in workfare or WIN programs, and national figures for comparative purposes.

An associate planner in a small Idaho community needed to know about the comprehensive planning process used in other communities of similar size.

The executive director of a southwest Mexico Council of Governments wanted sample model ordinances on zoning, personnel pay and classification, and municipal budgeting.

Several communities wanted information about the effects of the greatly increased use of coal and other energy resources on growth, life-style, and the environment in their areas.

Several individuals sought information about appropriate technology for small farms or family farms, being particularly eager to learn about such technology in Canada, Mexico and certain developing countries.

A women's group lost all its files in a fire and wanted copies of CETA regulations and the guidelines for the Women's Equity Education Act.

A member of the White House Commission on Mental Health wanted information about all legislation that might relate to the health of migrant workers.

A community leader in rural Pennsylvania needed information about rural/urban interrelationships and interdependency--information that would be helpful with a particular planning effort.

An official in an Arkansas agency for the elderly needed materials on nutrition programs for the aging.

Some of those requests required use of the computer terminal as one means of developing leads to resources. For the most part, however, the queries requiring use of the terminal are somewhat different. Here again, a few samples will suffice:

Many communities have wanted the lists of all federal programs under which they might be eligible for planning funds of any kind, or for planning funds for specific subjects, such as transportation or health.

A rural organization leader needed a bibliography on the economic and social characteristics of migrant farmworkers.

A professor in a small college wanted a bibliography of articles on the future of rural America, and with emphasis on energy and international marketing.

An arts council executive wanted a list of all legislation related to the arts nationwide and in rural areas.

An education specialist requested a literature search on all special education programs in rural schools.

A small farmer asked for a bibliography on the methodology of hydroponics and organic farming.

A staff member of an economic development district needed a list of all possible federal sources for economic development programs in rural areas: small, businesses, water/sewer programs, housing and transportation.

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PART VII

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

VII 1 PUBLICATIONS

- 1.1 Federal agency reference guide
- 1.2 Brochure about the Clearinghouse
- 1.3 Directory of Rural Organizations
- 1.4 Community Development Resource Guide

VII 2 OUTREACH

- 2.1 Contacts with Rural-interest Organizations
- 2.2 Contacts with Federal Departments and Agencies
- 2.3 Issues Meetings

VII 3 COMPUTERIZED MAILING LIST

VII 4 EVALUATION

PART VII

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

All work of the Information Clearinghouse that is not directly related to providing technical or reference assistance is considered "special activities". Each activity described in this section is carried out as a part of the effort to fulfill the responsibilities outlined in the initial grant to establish the Clearinghouse. (See II 1)

VII 1 PUBLICATIONS

1. 1 Federal-agency Reference Guide.

The first publication by the Clearinghouse was a quick-reference list of regional and area office contacts for federal programs serving rural areas. The publication was developed in response to a specific request by national rural organizations which found the Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance too comprehensive for their particular needs. Only the names, addresses and telephone numbers of principal officials responsible for major federal programs were included; there was no program analysis. Only 300 copies were printed and distributed. The document is now out of date and out of print and there is no plan to repeat the effort.

1. 2 Brochure about the Clearinghouse.

Once we had the basic staff in place and a system established for providing information, we developed a brochure describing the Clearinghouse. Fifty thousand copies were printed and about 30,000 distributed in November and early December 1976. This brochure provided the first widespread information about the existence and services of the Clearinghouse, and, of course, brought a "flood" of requests for information and assistance. The supply of the brochure is about depleted and we prefer not to reprint until we can secure the funding for some supplemental services felt to be essential to the Clearinghouse.

1. 3 DIRECTORY OF RURAL ORGANIZATIONS.

In June 1977, the Clearinghouse Director employed a special consultant to develop a basic directory of major national organizations having some concern with policies and programs in rural areas. In December, 3000 copies of the Directory of Rural Organizations were printed. Fifteen hundred were distributed immediately to key rural leaders and public officials; the other 1500 were distributed on request. By May, 1977 the supply was exhausted and a second printing of 600 copies was run to supply requests on hand.

In August, NRC negotiated a contract with the Rural Development Service of the Department of Agriculture for an updating and reprinting of 3000 copies. That job was completed in October 1977 and we now have

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a supply on hand. Single copies are distributed without cost; for additional copies there is a charge of $2.00. Income is placed in a revolving fund for future updates and reprintings.

The directory has had reviews in many rural-interest publications and the response has been highly favorable:

> Dennis Kleinsasser, Director of the Center for the Study of Local Government recently wrote, "It was well done and had enough information on each organization to provide a fairly good impression of the services they offer."
>
> Edwin Cobb, of the Commission on Rural Water, described it as a "a very fine product."
>
> Stephen R. Coats, of Bread for the World, remarked, "It is an excellent job...We also wish to thank you for the accurate discription of BFW. People don't always get it right!"
>
> Richard Nolan, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Family Farms, Rural Development and Special Studies:
>
> "I have reviewed the 'Directory of Rural Organizations' which you provided and I believe I will find it a most valuable document for the work of this Subcommittee. The document is very well prepared and quite useful. You have done an excellent job."
>
> We have received favorable responses from other rural groups such as the Rural/Regional Education Association, the Housing Assistance Council, and the National Council for the Transportation Disadvantaged.

In keeping with our original plan for the DIRECTORY OF RURAL ORGANIZATIONS, money was obtained from the Rural Development Service for development of an addendum which will provide basic information about private sources of funding for rural economic and human development projects. That project is still underway.

As soon as funds can be found, the plan is to develop sections on organizations by regions. There are many private and quasi-public groups that provide technical assistance or work to provide leadership in rural communities for community development. A beginning has been made in collecting information on such organizations in the New England and Mid-Western states. At present, there is no timetable for completion of this project.

1. 4 Community Development Resource Guide.

To help the Clearinghouse meet its responsibilities for outreach services, NRC obtained a $15,000 grant with which the Clearinghouse is developing a guide to public and private resources for rural programs. The guide, still in process, is designed especially to meet the needs of rural community development corporations, but is to be sufficiently inclusive to be helpful to community action agencies and private community organizations as well. The initiative for developing this guide grew out of a working conference on rural community economic development, sponsored jointly by the Clearinghouse and HEAD (Human Economic Appalachian Corporation). That conference, held in December 1976, was the first of a series in Appalachia and was designed to help the Clearinghouse determine what the needs are for leadership training. The projected publication date is March 1978.

VII 2 OUTREACH TO OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

In response to the mandate of the Clearinghouse to establish communications systems and to provide information in a useful form to other organizations, the Clearinghouse has taken the lead responsibility at the Rural Center for establishing contacts with rural-interest organizations, for carrying out frequent meetings with key federal agency officials, and for operating a series of issues meetings.

2. 1 Contacts with Rural-Interest Organizations.

During April and May 1976, we held a series of briefings with representatives of 58 national organizations having some concern with rural matters. Ninety-three such Washington-area groups had been identified. These meetings, planned and organized by the Information Clearinghouse staff, afforded NRC and the Clearinghouse an opportunity for a two-way exchange. We briefed organization representatives about our basic structure, goals and plans, and got from them their assessments of how we could be most productive in helping support or service their goals. Those meetings reinforced our own thinking about the need for the Center and the Clearinghouse, opened avenues for cooperation, and yielded specific suggestions for organizing our work. Response to the idea of the Center and Clearinghouse was enthusiastic at the time of the meetings. On-going working relationships have been established with many of the key organizations for exchange of information and other purposes. In addition, the staff participates in special meetings of national organizations. A few examples follow:

- NRC's Executive Director and Information Clearinghouse Director participated in a training session sponsored by the Center for Community Change for a group of citizens from Central Appalachia. Essentially, our role was to make known the purposes and services of the NRC. Ongoing contacts with some participants were established to help them meet program needs.

- In July 1976, the Information Clearinghouse Director and the Atlanta Regional Director for the NRC were responsible for a major session on "Why a Rural Strategy and How to Put It Together," at the Rural Caucus of the quarterly meeting of the National Congress for Community Economic Development (NCCED). The goal of the Rural Caucus session was to provide an initial training session in how to develop a strategy for a rural community, how to involve the citizenry in the process and decisions to be made, and how to gain access to the programs communities want.

- Clearinghouse staff members have participated in four of the leadership training schools operated by USDA's Rural Development Service--providing information and widening contacts with regional organizations and leaders.

- Clearinghouse staff members have worked with and provided information to various task forces of the House Congressional Rural Caucus over the past 18 months.

2. 2 Contacts with Federal Departments and Agencies.

In response to the mandate to get information to people who have policy-making powers, the Clearinghouse (jointly with NRC senior staff members) determined that it was important to acquaint key federal officials with the programs of the Clearinghouse and the Center. In May 1976, therefore, we invited members of the official Assistant Secretaries Working Group to a meeting for a two-way exchange of information. Representatives of all but one of the federal departments and/or agencies represented on this group attended the meeting, which provided the Clearinghouse an excellent source of contacts for gaining information and sharing insights in needs for rural development. That meeting has been followed by regular conferences with individual agencies. For example, special efforts and on-going working relationships have been carried out with regard to developing the proposals for income assistance and jobs programs (the President's "welfare reform" package), in helping with direction for the White House Conference on Balanced National Growth and Economic Development, and in working with inter-agency groups seeking to develop guidelines for a national rural strategy.

2. 3 Issues Meetings.

The concept for sponsorship by the National Rural Center of issues meetings was developed as a result of the first contact meetings with major national rural-interest organizations. The idea for loosely-structured meetings won enthusiastic approval by the group attending the first meeting. Meetings are held only as it seems appropriate, not on any regular schedule. The purpose of the sessions is to facilitate an exchange of information and ideas among groups having diverse interests, and to afford an opportunity for congressional and executive branch figures to exchange views with representatives of rural-interest organizations. The Senior Rural Programs Advisor is in charge of planning and arranging the meetings.

The entire NRC staff is involved in the preparation of information for the sessions. Due to the pressure of demands for reference and technical assistance, we have not been able to convene as many meetings as we should like or as would have been useful. We plan to expand the program during 1978. Meetings held to date are noted below:

- The first meeting was convened to provide the organizations a chance to meet Department of Agriculture's new Assistant Secretary for Rural Development, Alex Mercure. The special theme of that meeting was the impact of the winter fuel crisis and the drought in rural areas, and general rural development goals. This meeting was the one in which the groups endorsed the concept for the need to assemble periodically to discuss issues as they arise.

- The second meeting grew out of NRC's participation in the Interagency Committee on Rural Communications. Presentations were given by staff members from the National Rural Electrification Cooperative Association, the Office of Health at HEW, and others about how communications technology might better serve rural citizens in the delivery of health, education and social services. Members of the Interagency Committee were present to discuss their goals and to hear from representatives of rural organizations and communities their ideas about the special needs for improved communications.

- Deputy Assistant Secretary of Health for HEW, Karen Davis, was the featured speaker at an issues meeting on the planning effort for comprehensive national health insurance. This meeting included key staff members from congressional committees interested in proposed legislation--the goal being to bring out particular concerns that rural people might have about any national insurance legislation.

- Another meeting brought officials from the Office of Managment and Budget, HUD and the Treasury together with a special consultant to NRC who was working on a study to outline needs for credit and capital in rural areas and representatives of rural organizations. The purpose of that meeting was to surface issues and provide a forum for the exchange of ideas during the early stages of the administration's discussion and planning for a possible community development bank that would serve urban and rural communities.

VII 3 COMPUTERIZED MAILING LIST

The Clearinghouse has slightly more than 14,000 names on its computerized mailing list. That list is coded to make it possible to do selective mailings to special-interest groups and/or to selected geographic areas. Agency Codes, for example, identify city and county officials, foundations, poverty agencies, community development agencies, economic development districts, and federal agency officials. Title Codes identify special interests: communications, community development, education, elderly, employment, energy, environment, health, housing, legal services, minorities (Blacks, Chicanos, Women, Indians), poverty, small farms and transportation. In addition to the names on our own list, we have access to lists of officials in towns of 50,000 and under and to rural county officials by renting them as needed. That gives the Clearinghouse a mailing list of about 40,000 people who have important roles in making rural policy.

VII 4 EVALUATION

4.1 General Observations

Operating the Clearinghouse for twenty-one months has convinced us:

- that the need for information and assistance in rural areas is real and widespread;
- that the resources and techniques we have used, although limited to date by design and funding, are wanted and useful; and,
- that we must be able to make a long-range commitment to continue and expand the existing programs, and add new capabilities if we are to meet the challenge in a credible manner.

We are particularly pleased that the National Rural Center and its Clearinghouse staff are being looked to more and more as primary facilitators among voluntary agencies for efforts to coordinate federal programs. The Clearinghouse staff plays a significant role in those coordinating activities, especially in that the requests for assistance point up the needs for public and private programs that are especially pertinent to rural governing bodies and citizens. As was pointed out earlier in this Part VII section, staff members meet frequently with federal departmental and agency people to point up the needs for inter-departmental cooperation and the importance of that coordination to governments and people in rural areas. Judging from the splendid responses we get from our contacts with key federal staff people, the Center and the Clearinghouse have achieved a reputation as a solid, professional organization having no special axe to grind, but having a broad-gauge commitment to improving opportunities in rural areas.

Clearly, the Clearinghouse staff can improve the quality of its services. The need to increase the numbers of communities and individuals served is obvious. We can improve the quality of services with the existing staff and resources; we cannot increase the quantity, range and type of services without increased funding. We have developed plans for that expansion and have applications for funds pending in several places.

4.2 Follow-Through on Requests

During 1977, the National Rural Center's Information Clearinghouse undertook a follow-up project involving approximately 250 people who had requested assistance. The purpose was to help us evaluate our information services to rural communities. We wanted to determine whether or not communities and/or organizations had actually received funds or technical assistance as a result of the information provided, and to develop a more accurate picture of the adequacy and quality of the information provided through the reference services.

- Technical Assistance

Approximately 77 percent of those contacted about technical assistance rated the information provided by the Clearinghouse as good or excellent, while 7 percent rated the information as poor or inadequate for their particular need. Only 36 percent of those contacted were able to obtain financial or technical assistance as a direct result of our information. That response seems to indicate a gap between the sources we have been able to identify and the actual availability of financial or technical assistance.

In their efforts to obtain financial or technical assistance, individuals reported the following problems were encountered. They are listed in order of their frequency:

- the project was still in the planning stage and the suggested resources had not been tapped as yet;
- foundations seem not to be interested in rural areas;
- no funds were available;
- usually the community is unable to come up with matching funds even when some funding is available;
- the particular project had a low priority with the funding sources suggested by the Clearinghouse;
- funds were not available until a later date;
- most programs are designed basically for larger areas;
- too much red tape is required;

- village is too close to an urban area;
- the proposed project did not meet national guidelines;
- local provincialism stood in the way of follow-through;
- the requestor did not know how to use the information provided;
- the proposal to foundations needed revision;
- an engineering study was needed to get a fix on costs;
- small private for-profit organizations are not eligible for most programs.

In spite of the problems listed above, 60 percent of all those contacted about technical assistance were able to obtain some sort of assistance--whether from sources suggested by us or others of which they knew. Examples of those sources are:

Economic Development Administration
Community Services Administration
Department of Housing and Urban Development
CETA
Appalachian Regional Commission
Department of Labor
American Episcopal Church
Foundations: Public Welfare, Charles Stewart Mott
National Center for Appropriate Technology
Department of Health, Education and Welfare
Farmers Home Administration
Department of Agriculture
State and Local Governments

It is interesting to note that 58 percent of those contacted wanted help with a new request, indicating a confidence in the services of the Clearinghouse.

- Reference Assistance: Approximately 80 percent of those contacted rated the quality of information provided as "excellent" or as "good" while 11 percent rated the information as "poor" or "inadequate" for their particular need.

Many people requesting reference information actually do so as a step toward seeking funding or technical assistance to implement community programs. Nearly 65 percent of the people contacted stated that the reference information helped them to obtain financial or technical assistance, or helped them to complete a project. Seven percent received assistance from sources other than those recommended by us. The most frequent problem encountered by those unable to obtain the assistance they needed was an unresponsive agency.

Forty-three percent of those contacted with regard to the reference information wanted help with a new request. Many of these new requests were more oriented toward technical than to reference assistance.

4. 2 SAMPLE REMARKS RESULTING FROM CLEARINGHOUSE SERVICES

- Commenting that the information was helpful, the individual reported having gotten $26,582 from the Environmental Protection Agency, Step I - 201 Facilities Plan program.

- With regard to sources of assistance for planning to accommodate rapid growth: ". . . you pointed out to us sources of funding we were already aware of and in the process of application. What you did was confirm we were on the right track.."

- With regard to a forestry demonstration project, the information was helpful, "but I have not yet been funded."

- Information was helpful in the "location of funding sources on several grant applications."

- "Names of individuals who were given as resources proved very helpful."

- "We had already obtained the same information from other sources and contacted people before we received the same information from you."

- Information was helpful and the organization "received $9540 from the Community Services ... for transportation of the elderly."

- "Per your information, was made aware of $ 2 million of Local Public Works, Title II monies--allocated to governor. Our office proposed to the governor (that) monies for Emergency Work Program (be used) for farmers hit by drought. Governor agreed and program was implemented."

- "I requested information on funding in the two areas--small farms and minority problems in rural areas and in general rural development. Some material about CSRS (Cooperative State Research Service) funding and SRDC (Southern Rural Development Center) was sent which was vague..."

- "I was most impressed with your assistance."

- With regard to a request for assistance for water and sewer systems: "The information given was okay on your part. It's just that I never followed through with basic needs of our community." (The community now has a grant of $117,500 from FmHA, but the total project cost for water and sewer lines and a well is $598,000. The problem now is for the community to find the necessary $481,000 in matching funds.)

- "Information about a state conference, which I attended, proved very important, as well as various publications and moral support."

- "Thanks for your good help. Now I need some more."

- "We are following up the information provided and are of the feeling that some financial assistance will come from this information."

- One who said the quality of the information was "good", but was not helpful in obtaining financial or technical assistance, said "it probably was because we didn't know how to use it (the information)."

- "NRC's response to my inquiry was prompt, timely, and effective."

- " I never received the information."

- The Clearinghouse "provided information on where to go for assistance with women's programs. Some of the information was dated; however most of it provided at least a direction for pursuit of our aims. The information did not provide direct funding, but it enabled (us) to learn the process."

- Information was helpful: "We have obtained a $2.4 million loan and a $ 2.4 million grant from the FmHA to assist in financing water system improvements."

- As result of information, we got "TA from USDA and good background information on funding sources"; also received $15,000 for technical assistance to rural cooperatives and $10,000 from N.C.A.T. (National Center for Appropriate Technology) for regional newsletter."

- "If the project was pursued by our agency, I am sure we could have obtained financial assistance with the information furnished. In our case, we have been informed (that) the Legal Services Organization in Indiana has intentions of expanding legal services to our area."

- "I suppose we hoped for more strategic personalized referral to persons in foundations or elsewhere who would be interested in ________________________ (a rural magazine, special column). Instead, we were given names and addresses available in any Foundation Directory, names we already had."

- "The information was excellent, but our agency had just raised the 20% matching funds on 5 bussettes that we applied for last year and will be receiving from UMTA."

- "Our inability to obtain funds for our master street plan in no way reflects discredit on the Clearinghouse"

- Information was helpful: "We are now in the process of obtaining Emergency Medical Services. This will enable us to get more doctors."

- "The funding source you suggested in your data will not receive funds before January 1978. At that time, we will pursue the possibilities of acquiring funds to administer a legal service delivery system."

- "Information was helpful: "Public Welfare Foundation . . . gave $10,000 in matching funds for Title XX program--child care and early childhood education."

- "From the information received from your office, we were able to come up with two excellent sources. However, we didn't apply in time to get any funds."

- Leads to other sources of information were helpful: "Got assistance from Rural Development Centers and the HEW Office of Rural Development."

- One problem pointed out often by leaders in rural communities: "programs are basically for higher population areas." Another problem: "Some of the problem is provincialism of the people doing the planning, which has nothing to do with your effectiveness, just ours."

- " __________ County is interested in building an Emergency Central Control Center. We learned through NRC that there is no money available through any agency just for an Emergency Control Center; but we can coordinate this project with the upcoming proposed courthouse addition and be funded. If not for the assistance of NRC, we would still be looking for a route to insure just an ECC."

- "We got $14,000 to buy a playground for our young people." I am very pleased with the prompt action by (your staff) . . . I would not hesitate to contact NRC for future assistance."

- "The NRC information reinforced conclusions already drawn. While NRC's response was helpful, it did not point to any new avenues for research."

- From a congressional office: "I've used NRC on a number of occasions. As an information resource, it is second to none!"

final report

On Technical Assistance Grant No. 99-6-09521-3, by the Economic Development Administration of the Department of Commerce to the National Rural Center

December 1977 through September 1978

(Grant No. 99-6-09521-3 was an amendment to TA Grant Nos. 99-6-09521, 99-6-05221-1, and 99-6-05221-2.)

the
national
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"This technical assistance project was accomplished by professional staff members under a grant from the Economic Development Administration. The statments, findings, conclusions, recommendations, and other data in this report are solely those of the contractor and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Economic Development Administration."

THE NATIONAL RURAL CENTER'S

RURAL INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE...

. . . . A Report on its Accomplishments and Activities, December 1977 through September 1978

This report on the accomplishments and activities of the National Rural Center's Information Clearinghouse for December 1977 through September 1978 is an addendum to the Draft Report issued in December 1977: "THE NATIONAL RURAL INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE... a Report on its Establishment, Activities and Achievements, March 1976 through November 1977." Taken together these two documents constitute the final report on Technical Assistance Grant No. 99-6-09521 and amendments through 99-6-09521-3, by the Office of Technical Assistance, U.S. Department of Commerce to the National Rural Center (NRC) for operation of the Information Clearinghouse.

The December 1977 report is a full explanation of the structure, operations and programs of the Clearinghouse, which is a service arm of the National Rural Center. This document reviews special activities to increase outreach, intergovernmental and interorganizational activities and programs, developments in the library, reports on requests for assistance (reference and technical), the computerized mailing list for the last ten months, and comments briefly on future plans.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES TO INCREASE OUTREACH

Resource Guide and Directory of Private Funding

Experience during the first twenty-one months of operations by the Clearinghouse indicated the need to provide information to community officials and leaders on a broader basis than was possible through one-to-one responses to requests for assistance. It was decided, therefore, to develop two new community aids: a resource guide about major federal programs as well as other sources of aid for rural development and a directory of sources of private funding. Because funds under the EDA grant were not sufficient to cover the costs for those documents, the National Rural Center obtained grants from two private foundations for the first and from the Department of Agriculture for the latter. Both documents were released in September 1978.

The Resource Guide for Rural Development is 150 pages and is indexed according to various functions, such as economic development and housing.

The Guide:

- Introduces rural leaders to a wide-range of assistance possibilities: federal, state, foundation, religious, corporate, labor union, and technical assistance.
- Discusses the processes involved in obtaining assistance from those various resources.
- Provides profiles of federal programs, church programs, and technical assistance organizations and institutions which can be useful in rural development.

Single copies are available without charge to rural, non-profit organizations and rural officials. Otherwise, the publication price is $5 prepaid.

Private Funding for Rural Programs is 63 pages and includes a Directory of over 50 national, regional, and local foundations which fund rural projects and programs.

- The Directory contains descriptions of each foundation, including address, phone number, contact persons, financial data, and a summary of its fields of grantmaking interest, rural focus, and geographic area in which grants are made. The foundations are indexed alphabetically, by geographic area of grantmaking interest, and field of interest.
- In addition, the publication contains a discussion of the process of identifying and approaching suitable foundations, corporations, unions, and churches with bibliographies on each source of assistance.

The first copy is available free to anyone, additional copies are $2 prepaid.

Larry Newlin, Senior Rural Programs Advisor on the Clearinghouse staff, is the author of the Resource Guide for Rural Development. Most of his salary for time spent on development of the guide was paid by funds from the Public Welfare Foundation and the Lilley Endowment, as were all printing costs. EDA funds for the Clearinghouse provided part of the costs of salary because the guide is considered to be an essential tool for providing information to rural officials and leaders.

Barbara Stephens, who worked part-time for the Clearinghouse as Special Projects Advisor and part-time for the National Rural Center on other projects, developed and wrote the Directory, Private Funding for Rural Programs. Many communities, individuals and organizations requesting assistance from the Clearinghouse for community programs are seeking private funding because they have been unable to gain access to public funds, or because they need private money to supplement support provided from public sources. The Rural Electrification Administration of the Department of Agriculture provided a grant to cover part of the salary cost and all of the costs for publication of the private funding directory. EDA's Information Clearinghouse grant provided a portion of the cost of salary for research and writing. Publication of both documents demonstrates a typical approach by NRC in combining private and public resources and funds from two federal agencies in the interest of getting useful information to rural officials and community leaders.

Issues Reports

In order to provide more information to officials, organizations and individuals who had requested guidance from the Clearinghouse, we initiated issues reports (or briefing papers) on transportation, and housing/community development. Another reason for publication of the two sets of reports was to test whether or not such a service would be welcome and useful. The reports were sent to very limited audiences: anyone who had contacted the Clearinghouse about the two issues, and organizations working in those program areas. NRC provided the money for printing and mailing of the test reports. Larry Newlin edited the reports on transportation, which were prepared by Scott Forsyth, a volunteer with the National Council for the Transportation Disadvantaged; Gwendolyn Garner prepared the report on housing and community development. (Copies were included with the quarterly report to EDA of June 1978.)

The response to NRC's "Rural Health Newsletter" (funded from NRC's private resources) had indicated that there was a genuine need for special-issue reports to targeted audiences. That fact and the response to the two new and less formal reports led the National Rural Center to seek funds for a more formal series of newsletters as a function of its on-going information services.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND INTERORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

Link with Executive Branch

An activity of special importance during the last ten months of the Clearinghouse was the establishment of an on-going relationship with the White House Office of Intergovernmental Relations. From its early days, NRC's President, Jack Cornman and the Center have worked closely with key people in several departments in the executive branch. The goal of the special liaison with the White House staff was to help provide greater understanding of the needs in rural America at the top policy-making level and to exchange information.

The role of Clearinghouse staff members in the endeavor was to provide the Office of Intergovernmental Relations and its task forces on rural affairs with information about specific program needs or problems, based on contacts with rural officials and leaders. For example, special information was provided about the difficulties and the "Catch-22's" faced by rural communities in resolving problems related to water and sewer, transportation, housing, and health programs. The particular value of participation by the Clearinghouse in this project was the fact that the information it provided applied to specific communities and their problems, not merely to theoretical or general conditions. Also, because the requests to the Clearinghouse require information about programs in many federal departments and agencies, we were able to give some insight about how intergovernmental coordination might make it possible to more effectively serve rural areas, even in the absence of additional funds or new programs.

Directory of Regional Organizations

From June through August, Gwendolyn Garner, Rural Programs Advisor, worked on the development of a directory of regional organizations in rural areas. The goal, in part, was to test the value and feasibility of publishing a directory of non-governmental organizations which have the capability to provide training, technical assistance, information, or other services for rural communities. Other demands on the staff and the lack of adequate funds made it impossible to complete the process of identifying organizations or to fully test the usefulness of such a publication. The effort has been valuable several times, however, because it has enabled the Clearinghouse to provide lists of organizations outside of the Washington, D.C. area to individuals seeking rural contacts for conferences or other purposes. (A copy of information gathered to date is provided in an Appendix to the report for EDA only.)

It is hoped that funds can be raised and the directory completed as a complement to the Directory of Rural Organizations (a guide to major national organizations having significant rural interests) and the Directory, Private Funding for Rural Programs. The task will be difficult and the nature of the directory as conceived may have to be changed. It may be necessary, for example, to include a few key federal and state agencies, as well as quasi-public agencies, such as EDA's University Centers and the Department of Agriculture's four Rural Regional Development Centers.

Issues Meetings and Other Contacts

Shortly after its organization, the Clearinghouse established a policy of sponsoring "Issues Meetings," in which representatives of key national rural organizations and federal agencies, and/or congressional committee staff members met together to discuss major rural issues. The purpose was to share information about programs, problems and developing national policy. From December 1977 through June 1978 commitments to individual requests for assistance and other work made it necessary to temporarily discontinue those formal meetings. During that time liaison with other rural organizations and federal agencies took a different direction; for example:

- The Director of the Clearinghouse was an official participant in the White House Conference on Balanced National Growth and Economic Development. From the time of the initial announcement of the conference, she worked with Mike Koleda and his staff to alert them to the importance of including rural-interest organizations in early planning. She urged also that the planning committee point out to governors the importance of including representatives of rural communities in state pre-conference meetings and in the delegations named by them to the White House. The Director's general impression of the conference, as it dealt with issues related to growth and economic development in rural areas, was that the conference was constructive. Task force participants and those who testified in open hearings made quite clear their view that federal programs and policies should be designed to treat the nation as a whole and as one unit — not as divisible into competing rural and urban components. Participants indicated also that they wanted federal programs targeted to distressed areas, whether rural or urban. There was no comfort in the conference for individuals who might have thought to gain support for interregional or urban/rural competition for programs.

- In December 1977, the Clearinghouse staff helped a new organization, Rural American Women, with its first national conference which was held in February 1978. The staff identified federal officials and leaders (women and others) in private organizations who might be called upon to provide information to the conference about problems and opportunities in rural areas. The Clearinghouse also helped to identify rural needs, based on the requests we had received from communities and other information gathered by the staff, and research available in the early stages of identifying resources. The Clearinghouse staff who shared time in attending the meetings gained valuable new insights into the practical problems of getting information to rural areas and of implementing federal programs, as well as information about some of the gaps in programs.

  Rural American Women, in turn, agreed to provide NRC's Clearinghouse with lists of key women all over the country. As a follow-up to the conference, the Clearinghouse informed participants about the services of the Clearinghouse, and many of them now receive the "Rural Health Newsletter" and the two Issues Reports. Upon request, some were sent the Directory, Private Funding for Rural Programs.

- Members of the Clearinghouse staff worked regularly with the National Association of Counties, the National Governor's Association, the Rural Housing Coalition and transportation organizations.

- Larry Newlin participated in the annual meetings of State Community Affairs Agencies in Boston as well as the National Congress for Community Economic Development, and spoke to conferences on rural transportation. Gwendolyn Garner attended a tour of a housing development in Southern Appalachia with private agency representatives and federal agency officials. Barbara Stephens briefed an Appalachian conference on private resources for rural development.

- During the last quarter, two Issues Meetings were convened by the Information Clearinghouse staff: Joseph Burstein, Chairman of HUD's Task Force on Rural and Non-metropolitan Areas, discussed the report of the Task Force and Secretary Harris's subsequent initiatives. Jim Childress of the White House Conference on Balanced National Growth and Economic Development reviewed the recommendations of the conference, the implications for rural development, and the process for acting upon recommendations.

THE LIBRARY

During the last ten months of the grant, the demand for library services increased and the variety of rural issues to be covered grew -- both at a rapid rate. From June through September alone, the library acquired approximately 800 books, reports, and monographs for the general collection; about 300 congressional documents; 37 new serial titles; also cataloged 268 documents. Since the Draft Report to EDA in December 1977, over 2,800 documents have been acquired, 750 documents cataloged, and 115 new serial titles added. The collection as a whole now contains over 4,400 volumes of books, reference materials, technical reports, congressional and executive-branch documents, and over 350 serial titles that deal with national and local rural issues. Indexing and abstracting services are provided by the library staff for many of the serials in the collection. Special new services instituted during the ten-month period include:

- The development of a system for circulating to the Center and the Clearinghouse a monthly Acquisitions List of major documents and books acquired and cataloged. The list is a duplication of library catalog cards and is organized by subject area. The system was instituted to provide a quick-reference for staff members to the latest documents, and to test its usefulness and the feasibility of providing it to rural-interest libraries and organizations. The National Rural Center has an application pending at a private foundation for funds which would make it possible to distribute the list to a wider audience.

- Addition of *New York Times Information Bank* to the data bases available through the computer information retrieval system. That data base provides coverage of new reports and editorials in over 60 publications, such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *National Journal*, *Black Scholar* and *Wall Street Journal*. The Head Librarian and Congressional Reference Specialist have been trained to use the system.

- Cataloging relevant articles from journals and periodicals — articles which are not readily available in standard indexing sources. That practice expands the usefulness of the card catalog and that of the large library collection of periodicals.

One of the major increases in demand for information and services by the staff and the public has been for statistical data about rural areas. The library uses the *American Statistics Index: A Comprehensive Guide and Index to U.S. Government Publications* as a major tool for identifying gaps in the collection. The latest check of the collection against the *Index* revealed that the library already had 70 percent of the sources cited in 1977. To further facilitate access to statistical information in the library, the cataloger denotes on catalog cards which documents contain statistics.

This ten-month period has also seen increased use of the library by the public. Smaller organizations which cannot afford to purchase some of the more expensive journals, such as *Congressional Quarterly*, the *National Journal* and *Employment and Training Reporter*, send their staff to NRC's library for reference work on a regular basis.

Even though most of the library's patrons write or call for information, the number of walk-ins has increased. Examination of the library register indicates that 70 percent of the walk-ins live outside the Washington metropolitan area. In most instances, those individuals are in the area on other business and view the National Rural Center as a valuable resource for information on rural affairs and rural development issues.

Examples of the interests of the walk-in public indicate a wide range of concerns:

higher education involvement in rural community development
funding sources for information systems
citizen participation in rural development
general information on rural development
problems in delivery of health care in rural areas
agricultural land preservation
state economic planning and community economic development
rural education
rural planning.

The degree of satisfaction is documented in the library register. In response to the question, "Did you find the information you were looking for?", in all cases except two, the answer was "Yes." One respondent replied, "Partially"; the other, "No, but did acquire information in other areas."

REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE

Requests for assistance during the last quarter followed the pattern and variety shown in the first two quarters, although at a reduced scale. The reduction in numbers of requests was due in large part to the fact that the Clearinghouse did not send out new mailings about its services because of uncertainty as to its continued existence. We did not want to raise expectations about an ongoing service which might not be funded after the end of September. Another reason for not stimulating new requests on a broad scale was the fact that we wanted to complete the self-instituted projects for assisting rural officials and organizations through generalized publications. The Clearinghouse did not abandon its commitment to the system of responding to individual inquiries. In fact, it considers that to be the backbone of its work and a most valuable method of building knowledge and understanding of community development problems and opportunities in rural areas. The reports that follow are examples of requests for the entire ten months.

Technical Assistance Requests

Community Facilities

- A rural county in Alabama requested information on funds available to build an animal shelter. We suggested FmHA Community Facilities Loan program as a possibility and mentioned that the state health department might be able to fund such a project. (The State Health Department supplied guidelines and application materials and the county applied for funds.)

- Several requests were made for information on funds for recreational services. We suggested the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, Department of Interior and the Farmers Home Administration's Outdoor Recreation Loans.

- Several rural communities requested information on funds available for housing rehabilitation. FmHA was suggested as the principal administering agency for rural housing programs. The Urban Development Action Grant Program, authorized under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1977 to revitalize and reclaim deteriorating neighborhoods, was also mentioned as a possibility. Twenty-five percent of the $400 million authorized for this program must go to cities under 50,000 in population.

- A business association in Wisconsin requested information on funding for renovation of the local courthouse, construction of a fire station and renovation/rehabilitation of the downtown area. The village has already been promised $20,000 in Community Development Block Grant money from the state to begin renovation of the courthouse. We also suggested the Community Facilities Loan Program under Farmers Home Administration. The loans can be used for fire and rescue services, as well as for improvement of community facilities providing essential services to rural areas. We sent a copy of a booklet entitled "Sources of Federal Funds for the Fire Services," compiled by the National Fire Prevention and Control Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.

- A small town in North Dakota requested information on funding sources to restore a library which is also an historic landmark. The Library Services and Construction Act, under which grants were previously available to aid states for construction, renovation, etc., of public libraries, has not been funded since 1973. Unfortunately, many rural areas are still without facilities necessary to provide adequate library services. The National Trust for Historical Preservation and the State Office of Historical Preservation were mentioned as possibilities, along with Farmers Home Administration's Community Facilities Loan program. Additional suggestions about use of Community Development Block Grants and General Revenue Sharing were sent.

- A fire department in Michigan needed information on potential funding sources to build a new fire station. We advised the community of several programs. FmHA can insure loans to communities for fire and rescue services at reasonable interest rates for up to 40 years. Title IV of the Rural Development Act of 1972 authorized the Rural Community Fire Prevention Grants. Under this program towns can receive financing for up to 50 percent of the cost of training and equipment. A new agency, the National Fire Prevention and Control Administration, funded by the Department of Commerce, recently completed a study entitled "Master Planning for Rural and Small Communities" in which other possibilities may be suggested.

- A North Carolina individual wanted information on possible foundations that might fund a solar energy/housing demonstration project. We could not identify many foundations interested in either, but information was supplied to suggest four remotely possible sources. We are aware of federal programs that can support solar energy demonstrations, but the individual was interested only in foundation support.

Economic Development

- A minority nonprofit organization in California wanted assistance in locating funds to expand a squab production operation. We suggested the Minority Business Enterprise program in the Department of Commerce, and the Cooperative Development Division of the Department of Agriculture. USDA's Economic, Statistic, and Cooperative Development Service later wrote the organization and offered assistance in analyzing the economic feasibility of the project.

- A council of governments in South Carolina wanted information to help in evaluating the method of solid waste disposal being used by two communities in the area. Information from the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Association of Counties was provided.

- A policy analyst with the State Economic Opportunity Office in South Dakota wanted information on funding sources for a new community development corporation. Since an application was pending with the Community Services Administration Office of Development, information on foundations and church resources was provided.

- A nonprofit organization in Mississippi requested information on restoring an old school building which would serve as a community center. The Farmers' Home Administration's Community Facilities Loan, and the Community Development Block Grant program were given as possibilities.

- A six-county consortium of local government officials, school boards, and hospitals in North Carolina was seeking start-up funds for a cooperative data processing center. The consortium had already approached several foundations and wanted names of other potential sources. Information was sent on six foundations; the Office of Telecommunications Policy sent a report containing suggestions regarding possible federal funding sources.

- A sewing cooperative in Vermont needed assistance in locating funds to expand the newly formed cooperative. We suggested that they contact the Center for Community Change and the Cooperative League USA for information and assistance. It was also suggested that they investigate the foundations in the Vermont area as possibilities.

- An individual in New York wanted information on federal assistance for fish hatching and growing. The individual was informed of Farmers' Home's farm ownership loan program and loans available from the Small Business Administration.

- A federal government official requested information on possible foundations to provide funds for the initial testing costs of an oyster-shucking machine that had been developed by an individual in New York. Three private foundations and two other private organizations were suggested as possible funding sources.

- In a follow-up request from a six-county consortium of local government officials, school boards, and hospitals in North Carolina, information was sought on availability of federal funds for a solar heating/wind-generating demonstration project for their proposed cooperative data center. Information was supplied on the Department of Energy's solar heating and cooling demonstration grant program (for commercial buildings). DOE's Wind Generation Branch has no funds for demonstration programs, but we supplied names of associations to contact for information about commercial wind-generating units.

- A three-state federation of food cooperatives needed a low-interest loan to expand its present warehouse to increase inventory. Because there was no federal program providing funding for non-agricultural cooperatives at that time, information was sent on the pending National Consumer Cooperative Bank bill, which contains a provision for loans to non-agricultural cooperatives. Names of major foundations that are interested in funding cooperatives were also forwarded. The group was referred to local Virginia and North Carolina foundations, and the Campaign for Human Development. (The bill was signed into law in August 1978, and the federation plans to sponsor an informational conference on the Act in December.)

- A church-related community organizing group in the depressed Bootheel region of Missouri wanted names of additional foundations that might fund their organization. Because they have tapped most of the likely sources, we could only suggest one other foundation. They were also referred to Title V personnel in the state land grant university for possible additional assistance.

- An organization on the West Coast involved in a suit against the government to break up large landholdings and give the land to small farmers requested information on funding sources for its program of public education and litigation. The organization was referred to a directory of Change-Oriented Foundations, some of which have already funded the program, the Guide to California Foundations, and the Foundation Center's Regional Collection for the area.

- A town in Minnesota located in the depressed Iron Range is threatened by the expansion of the steel industry toward the town's limits. Future alternatives are now being considered including relocation, expanding businesses in the town to provide economic alternatives; also improving water and sewer, recreation and housing in the town. The Information Clearinghouse has provided the town with knowledgeable contacts that can help them in deciding their future course.

- Organizations in Vermont and Illinois have contacted us for information on funding sources for small farm festivals and food-buying clubs. A Congressman from California sought advice regarding a similar request from an Indian organization in his home district. A low-income cooperative in Louisiana sought funding for an agricultural training program, and received economic stimulus funds from the Department of Labor. The research that was conducted in preparing the Resource Guide for Rural Development on church-funding sources for hunger-related projects has been useful in answering requests such as these in which few federal funding programs are applicable.

Education

- Another continuing effort has been with the Children's Center in Mississippi. Earlier efforts by the Information Clearinghouse have assisted the Center to apply leverage to gain additional state support through Title XX Social Services by successful grantsmanship efforts in winning foundation support. This last year the Center doubled its student enrollment and has a large waiting list. It was looking for funds to build a new building. For various reasons, the Center was unable at this time to obtain support through the State Department of Education or from federal sources. Therefore, several national foundations are being approached to fund the new building. The Information Clearinghouse has assisted by identifying a private consultant with whom the Children's Center contracted to write the proposals, and has provided suggestions on ways to increase local financial support.

- A local native American organization in California needed assistance in locating funds for a Child Care Pre-School Center and a Media Training Center. Title XX of the Social Security Act and the Child Welfare Research and Demonstration Grants program under the Department of Health, Education and Welfare were suggested. Several California foundations which had contributed in the past to child day care programs were also suggested.

- An individual with a County Board of Education in eastern North Carolina requested assistance in identifying national and local foundations that might fund a program to enable the county to bring arts and cultural programs to school children. Information was sent on several national foundations with interests in the fields of education and in rural programs, as well as those North Carolina foundations most likely to consider a project of this sort.

- An individual interested in writing a book highlighting the lives and accomplishments of several rural American women wanted leads to potential foundation funding sources. Because so few foundations made grants to individuals or for the specific purpose of writing a book, we are working with this individual to suggest alternate ways of getting funds for the project.

- A volunteer in the mountains of North Carolina sought to identify funding resources for a program to assist in creative arts and child development. Information on the Appalachian Regional Commission and several foundations was sent.

- An individual with the Cooperative State Extension Service in a western Pennsylvania county wanted information on foundations that provide funding to establish training programs for mentally and physically handicapped people. Information was sent on several foundations that make grants for "social welfare" types of programs in western Pennsylvania and on ways to do further research on these and other Pennsylvania foundations.

- The public library in a rural community in western Pennsylvania sought leads to locate private foundations that might continue funding an outreach program for functionally illiterate and culturally deprived individuals of all ages in the area. (Federal funds that started the program will not be renewed.) Information was sent on several Pennsylvania foundations interested in funding education and welfare projects in western Pennsylvania; suggestions were made about how to research these and other Pennsylvania foundations at the Foundation Center Regional Collection in Pittsburgh.

- A rural county organization in Texas wanted assistance in locating funding for a nursery and a reading tutorial program. For the nursery project NRC suggested Title XX of the Social Security Act, which provides money to the states for day care services. For the tutorial program VISTA volunteers were suggested.

- We received a request for information about sources of funding for several programs: housing for the handicapped, pre-school programs for the handicapped, and the prevention of retardation. We suggested the HEW Maternal and Child Health Services Program, administered by the state health agency; and the HEW handicapped, preschool and school programs, administered by the state education agency. The housing programs administered by HUD (Housing for the Elderly and Handicapped, Mortgage Insurance-Rental Housing for the Elderly and the Lower Income Housing Assistance Program) were also suggested.

- A youth center in Michigan requested information on sources for funding a day care facility. We suggested Title XX of the Social Security Act and the Community Facilities Loan Program under the Farmers' Home Administration. Also suggested were some private foundations located in Michigan.

Health

- A non-profit organization providing programs to meet needs of pre-school children and their parents in a rural West Virginia county sought information on sources of funding for a Parent Resource Center, and on the status of CETA reauthorization legislation. The organization was already aware of CETA, ARC, Title XX; it was receiving funds from CETA and Title XX. It could not approach ARC for grant under the Child Development Program because the local school board was already submitting a proposal. We sent information on two HEW programs: Child Development-Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Treatment. Both programs' application deadlines for FY '78 had already passed, but we sent program announcements anyway to give an idea of what the program required in an application. We also sent an update on CETA reauthorization legislation and descriptions of possible foundations that might fund the program.

- A school in Kentucky wanted help in identifying sources of funding for a self-care health program. The Clearinghouse staff suggested state, federal, and private sources.

- One requestor wanted information on the utilization of nurse practitioners with a special interest in cost-containment and reimbursement. We responded to the request by forwarding copies of four papers presented at an NRC-sponsored conference on Physician Assistants and Nurse Practitioners. Also, an article from the New England Journal of Medicine was cited.

- A regional planning commission in Pennsylvania needed assistance in locating funds to build a facility to house a nonprofit health agency. We suggested the Appalachian Regional Commission's health program and FmHA's Community Facilities Loan program.

- A cancer center in Texas wanted information on funding sources for a Dial Access System to provide information to researchers and health practitioners in the field. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare was suggested as the most likely federal source for funding. We also suggested the possibility of foundation support and provided the names of several which had indicated an interest in health and medical research.

- A consortium of four primary medical facilities in western Kentucky sought information on potential sources of funds for a consumer health education project, which has an ARC planning grant until November 1978. The project manager had already investigated CETA, Extension, and Food and Nutrition programs, CSA programs, HEW programs in Health Education, Maternal and Child Health, Rural Health Initiative grants, and over 100 private foundations — national and local. We could offer no additional suggestions other than information on the Office of Health Information and Promotion at HEW, which was newly-authorized in 1976 but does not have a sufficient appropriation to conduct a grants program.

- The Pennsylvania Health Department requested information on possible private foundations that might be interested in funding its proposed Community Health Intervention project. Because it had already contacted the large national foundations interested in rural health care programs and several large Pennsylvania foundations, we suggested only one other national foundation interested in community health. We also supplied information on how to go about researching smaller Pennsylvania foundations. We gave little encouragement about private foundation funding for this type of project because most foundations do not make grants to government agencies.

- In a follow-up request from the director of a CAP in Georgia, additional names of potential foundation funding sources were requested. Funds are needed to purchase an existing facility to be used in conjunction with an HEW Rural Health Initiative grant to provide needed health care services to the rural area. Information was sent on three foundations and one church group.

- A community worker in Texas sought information on funds for a community plagued by poor water; also the death of two children from poisoning caused by lead base paint. We sent information on FmHA water and sewer grant programs, the National Demonstration Water Project and Texas Water Development Board; also information on the HEW Center for Disease Control's Lead-based Paint Poisoning Program.

- A local government official from a rural community in Southern California requested information on funding sources to construct an emergency medical clinic for the community. Financial assistance had already been sought from the nearest hospital, to which emergency cases are currently sent. The hospital has refused financial support for building a facility in the small community. Information was furnished on several federal funding possibilities: Funding Community Facilities Loans; HEW's Rural Health Initiatives program and the Emergency Medical Services program; a USDOT emergency transportation program; and three foundations. (The latter would be appropriate only if a nonprofit organization were to raise the funds for the clinic.)

- A nonprofit corporation in Nebraska that provides counseling and rehabilitation for alcohol and drug abusers referred by courts in a twelve-county area wanted information on availability of federal funds for converting a hospital into a residential treatment center for youthful alcohol and drug abusers. Information about project grants and formula grants funded by the National Institute of Drug Abuse and National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism was provided. (Both programs are coordinated or administered at state level.) Also sent were the state contacts for CETA Title XX Social Services program, LEAA.

- A health clinic administrator in the Pacific Northwest requested information on funding sources for construction of a clinic facility. The clinic already had a proposal pending to the Kresge Foundation. Information and names of local and state contacts for FmHA were sent. Also, names and brief descriptions of Oregon foundations that might be interested in funding the project were sent, along with information on the Foundation Center's Regional Collection for Oregon.

- Another health clinic in Oregon needed a list of foundations that might provide funds to help the clinic liquidate the debt on its physical facilities. The operational costs of the clinic are being borne by a HURA (Health Underserved Rural Area) grant from HEW. The clinic needs to eliminate the debt on its building and property so that it can continue operation on a self-sustaining basis when the grant expires. Information was sent on seven foundations within Oregon which have funded health programs previously, and four large foundations outside Oregon that have funded health-related projects in the State.

- A sub-area Advisory Council of an Iowa Health Systems Agency sought information on sources of funding to purchase equipment (primarily mannequins, but also films and other equipment) needed to train segments of the population in a 20-county region in CPR cardiopulmonary resuscitation techniques. A FAPRS run was done and potential federal funding agencies were called, but none of the agencies fund this sort of project. Information was sent on the GSA Federal Surplus Personal Property Donation Program, which might be a "long-shot." Descriptions of possible private foundations were forwarded also.

Transportation

- A rural parish in Louisiana wanted information on funding available for roads and bridges. The Economic Development Administration (Department of Commerce) and the Federal Highway Administration (Department of Transportation) were mentioned as the most likely sources of federal funding. The Industrial Development Grant program administered through Farmers' Home Administration was also suggested as a possibility.

- Information was supplied the Jefferson Area United Transportation, Inc. in Virginia on national directions in the Department of Labor's CETA public service employment program. Concern had been expressed that the transportation system's CETA slots would be discontinued at the end of the fiscal year. Continuing efforts were also made with the Rural Rides System in Maine and the Kentucky Youth Research Center in Kentucky, as these agencies seek ways to build a transportation system.

- A nonprofit county organization in North Carolina wanted leads to funding sources for a county-wide coordinated transportation system. Currently there are no federal funds for this type of program. We referred the organization to numerous information sources, including state officials and private transportation organizations. General information was also sent on North Carolina foundations, but little encouragement was given because most will not fund this sort of project.

- In general, requests have come from Virginia, Maine, Kentucky, Nebraska, North Carolina, New Mexico, and Pennsylvania for information on sources of funding for rural public transportation. At that time Congress had not authorized a rural transportation assistance program that contains both operating capital and technical assistance. There remain a number of fragmented funding sources in the Departments of Health, Education and Welfare, Labor, and other federal agencies. The coordination of these programs is the goal of a White House interagency working group on rural transportation, with which the Information Clearinghouse has worked closely.

Reference Requests

- A graduate student from Memphis State University needed reports, studies, articles or bibliographies on:

    a. conversion of agricultural land to urban uses;

    b. social/cultural costs associated with disruption of farm life;

    c. degradation of the quality of life or quality of environment associated with agricultural land.

  We provided a list of persons who serve on the USDA Land-Use Committee and suggested he use the members as resource persons. A computer print-out containing over 200 citations based on his request was sent to him. In addition, we recommended relevant books and documents owned by NRC's library.

- The executive director of the Economic Development Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania requested a computer bibliographic search of information published since 1975 on land use, transportation, and water/sewer as it relates to rural development.

- A medical librarian for a rural health clinic requested a literature search on health education in rural areas, health care information delivery systems in rural areas, and information on the state-of-the-art for the concept "latch". A search of NRC's library on-line services did not yield adequate information to satisfy the requestor. We supplemented our search by performing a Med-line search through the National Library of Medicine.

- A town planner from the Richmond County Board of Commissioners in Rockingham, North Carolina needed a listing of the federal programs available for his community in the areas of 1) community facilities, 2) business and industrial development, 3) planning and technical assistance, and 4) housing. We provided a FAPRS search as a means if identifying possible sources of funding for his projects.

- A citizen of Southbridge, Massachusetts asked if we could provide materials on population shifts or reverse migration patterns. We gathered free copies of several recent reports from the Economic Research Service that dealt with migration patterns and sent them to him.

- Information needs of the staff included a literature search on the business and economic conditions of New Mexico, and gaps in credit and capital supply to low income families and rural areas. We searched the New York Times Information Bank to find news articles for both those requests.

- A graduate student form the University of Illinois requested information about the problems of alcoholism and alcoholism treatment in rural areas. A computer print-out containing over 100 citations on alcoholism in rural areas from the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol Information data bank was sent. In addition, we referred her to a recent survey conducted by the National Association of Counties Research Foundation and provided a listing of organizations that have the capability to provide additional sources of information on alcoholism.

- An individual coordinating 19 separate fund-raising campaigns for the northern Virginia 4-H Educational Center's physical plant development contacted us for information on the nature of the research involved in foundation proposal-writing, the complexity of the task, the time needed, and tips on successful proposal-writing for foundations. All of this information was supplied in a personal visit. A personal tour and explanation of the reference tools available at the Foundation Center's national collection in Washington, D.C. was also provided. The individual later told us that we had saved him "at least a week's worth of work" and he was able to identify 30 potential foundations as a result of our assistance.

- A state official in North Carolina wanted information on leadership training for volunteers in rural areas. Information and guidelines developed by private and public resources were provided.

- The Snake River Regional Studies Center in Idaho requested information on ways to become more involved in the surrounding community, with particular emphasis on the rural elderly and rural women. In the field of aging, the requestor was referred to the National Council on Aging, Green Thumb, and to other groups focusing on the rural elderly. Since the National Rural Center was assisting in the planning of a Rural American Women's Leadership Conference, information was sent about that meeting. The requestor was able to attend. The Information Clearinghouse sent an executive summary of the National Rural Center/Pennsylvania State University evaluation of Title V of the Rural Development Act of 1972 which outlined the roles of land-grant universities in focusing greater attention on rural development research and extension. Information was also provided on other colleges and universities involved in rural development including: the Appalachian Leadership and Community Outreach, Inc., the Center for Regional Services of Murray State University, the Institute of Community and Area Development of the University of Georgia, the Institute on Man and Science, the Institute for Social Research and Development of the University of New Mexico, and the Countryside Council of Southwest Minnesota State College.

- The Mountain Association for Community Economic Development in Kentucky wanted to know what evaluations have been conducted on EDA's growth center strategy and economic development districts. The Information Clearinghouse was able to arrange for the 1972 EDA study of growth centers to be sent to him and informed him of other articles on growth centers that had been cited in computer bibliographic searches conducted by staff. A computer search was conducted on economic development districts which cited a study by Robert Nathan Associates among other articles and studies.

- The Transportation System Center in Cambridge, Massachusetts (a research office of the U.S. Department of Transportation) wanted suggestions about rural transportation systems other than Section 147 rural bus demonstrations, in order to conduct surveys on costs-per-passenger mile. Clearinghouse staff provided several suggestions, including names of participants, recent rural transportation conferences, counties studied in a recent rural transportation research project by the National Association of Counties Research Foundation, and demonstrations conducted by the Community Services Administration and the Appalachian Regional Commission.

- An Economic Development District in California requested information on projects related to rural economic development. We forwarded a copy of the publications list from the Economic Development Administration/Office of Economic Research along with two reports entitled "Socioeconomic Effect of Major Construction Activities on Small Isolated Communities" by Michael Wise, and "Industry Brings Community Change" by C. Matthew Snipp and Gene F. Summers.

- A southwest Mississippi planning agency requested a guide to private organizations interested in energy-related projects in New Mexico, Arizona, California, Nevada, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Hawaii and the Pacific Trust Territories. We compiled a list of eleven organizations including Ecotope, Dineh Cooperatives and others.

- The central Savannah River Area Planning and Development Commission wanted to be kept informed about developments with regard to regulations for the implementation of the Rural Planning Grants program authorized in Section III of the Rural Development Act. Initial draft regulations (prior to insertion in the FEDERAL REGISTER) were sent, along with a copy of NRC's comments on that draft.

- A researcher for the Center for Community Economic Development needed a list of state programs that aid rural development. NRC's new publication, Directory of State Title V Rural Development Programs was used as a reference.

- A staff member of Senator Don M. Riegle's office wanted information on federal support for economic development in rural areas. Our office collected several reports from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Economic Development Administration for his perusal.

- The Director of the Regional Services program in Murray, Kentucky wanted to conduct a survey on the community's needs in a 24-county area, and requested information on survey sampling techniques. A Needs Assessment Kit developed by NRC staff was provided, and he was referred to the project officers of the Kentucky Goals Study (a community needs survey) at the University of Kentucky. A computer print-out was also sent to him on survey sampling techniques and questionnaire design.

- A private foundation wanted information and materials on rural population change; health, poverty, and transportation issues of rural areas. A packet of materials was collected from such sources as Economic Research Service (now known as the Economic Research and Statistics Service), American Medical Association, National Academy of Sciences, and the Bureau of the Census.

- A doctoral student at the University of Maryland requested a computerized literature search on social services in rural areas. A print-out containing 46 citations from the ERIC data base was provided.

- A program director of a research center wanted to know what grants were given for rural development programs; agriculture, food and nutrition research; and for conservation of natural resources in 1977. A computer search of the Foundation Grants Index was provided.

- An agricultural marketing specialist requested a computerized literature search on fruit and vegetables cooperatives, and marketing studies of fresh fruit and vegetables. A computer search was conducted, using the National Agriculture Library data base.

- A small town newspaper reporter requested information on rural development in the Carolinas. A packet of materials from the Office of Rural Development in Columbia, South Carolina and the Center for Rural Resource Development of North Carolina was collected and forwarded.

- A college professor at Norfolk State College requested a computer search on mental health of minorities in rural areas. A computer search of Psychological Abstracts and ERIC was conducted.

- A small town in Arkansas requested a FAPRS search on health facilities planning and construction. A computer search was conducted and technical assistance by NRC's health director was provided.

- A college professor in New York requested assistance in identifying rural primary group (or solo) practices that take a "holistic" approach to the delivery of health care. We could find no single source that pinpointed those types of practices. Instead, we suggested several types of alternative health care models: HMO's (with names of two rural ones); Rural Health Initiative programs; Kellogg Foundation's holistic health centers project, etc.

- Information on how to run a large benefit concert and a local film series to raise money was requested by a local organization in West Virginia. Information was sent on grass roots fund-raising and a book that can be ordered covering both those activities.

- The Conference Director from a college in Georgia requested information on congressional committees that are designed to deal with the needs of the rural poor, for a Conference on "Save the Rural Poor." We sent him information on the jurisdiction of each committee that might deal with matters relating to rural poverty and a Calendar of action taken by the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, as he expressed a particular interest in that Committee. It was also suggested that he check the Congressional Quarterly annual reports.

- The Southern Cooperative Development Fund in Louisiana requested information on the Rural Development Act legislation relating to farmers, including the Young Farmers Act and National Marketing Commission, and bibliographies on the effect of rural migration on the cities. We sent information on the Rural Development Act and a publication on all legislation relating to the Farmers Home Administration. We also sent the Young Farmers Homestead Act and hearings on the Act, as well as information on a multifaceted bill, which is on family farms and contains a provision dealing with farm marketing programs. Also sent were several bibliographies on migration from urban-to-rural and rural-to-urban localities, and a number of publications dealing with rural and urban migration and the general effects of such population changes.

- The Department of Rural Development of the Catholic Diocese of Nashville, Tennessee requested information about the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977. We sent information on how the program will be run in the states, and information from Departments of Interior and Agriculture regarding whom to contact in Nashville on the program.

- In response to a request for bibliographies on small farms and land use from the Coordinator of Oklahoma Health Systems Agency, we sent copies of several bibliographic printouts based on a computerized search.

- In response to a request from a teacher in Southwest New Mexico regarding information on migrant education, we sent general information from HEW and referred her to an office of ERIC in New Mexico.

- A student in Philadelphia wanted information regarding health conditions and social consequences of these conditions for Mexican Americans and American Indians; we sent a variety of materials received from several sources, including HEW.

- The employment coordinators of two different youth employment service agencies in the state of New York requested information and publications on youth employment. We acquired and sent them pamphlets, brochures, and reports from the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor. Included in this packet was the latest edition of the Employment and Training Report of the President; also, the names and addresses of several organizations that focus on youth employment were cited as possible sources for additional information.

- A senior economist from the Ministry of Treasury Economics and Intergovernmental Affairs in Toronto, Ontario requested information about NRC's activities in small-scale farming. We sent a copy of the agenda for phase two of the NRC small family/farm project, and we referred him to the project's principal investigator for further information concerning the project.

- The Administrative Director of Human Services, Inc., of Columbus, Indiana requested information about NRC's programs and its funding sources, as well as major funding sources for social service programs in rural areas. The newly published directory by the Clearinghouse, Private Funding for Rural Programs, was sent. In addition, we recommended that she consult the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance, and the Foundation Directory.

- A librarian of the Greene County Public Library in Pennsylvania is assisting a group that is trying to develop programs for the elderly in rural areas. He requested examples of successful outreach programs for the elderly, a listing of advocacy groups for the rural elderly, and general information on the problems of the rural elderly. We used the resources of the library at the National Council on the Aging to compile a list of advocacy groups and locate reports on outreach programs for the rural elderly. Also, we sent a copy of the hearings held in 1975 before the Select Committee on Aging on the problems of the rural elderly in Pennsylvania, and a computer print-out of Congressional documents on the social and economic conditions of the rural elderly.

o A member of the Regional Staff of a small Minnesota town's Department of Natural Resources wanted information on possible funding sources for energy conservation systems in public installations, and on the status of H.R. 8444, which would authorize matching grants in installing energy saving equipment. We gave him information on the status of H.R. 8444 and advised him that authorizations for any Federal program(s) for energy conservation are contained in this legislation and must await final action of Congress before any grants would be available. We suggested that he contact us after this energy package is passed by Congress, and we would then attempt to assist with information on funding sources.

o A professor at Central Michigan University requested information on modern agri-business, agri-law, family farms, and agricultural public policy for a course he was planning. We sent bibliographies on family farmers, on law and legislation (as pertains to agriculture), on public policies and on agri-business; recommended two newsletters; sent material on general small farms policy and a list of other organizations dealing with rural concerns.

o A development association in Seattle requested information on the Family Farm Development Act. We sent a copy of the legislation and a brief summary of the bill and advised them that congressional action would most likely be taken in 1979 and that Title IV of the Development Act was incorporated into another bill, which has been signed by the President.

o An employee of HUD requested the names of community groups in rural areas which have shown an interest in or a capability to do housing rehabilitation. We suggested 17 organizations, including such organizations as the Kentucky Mountain Housing Development Corporation, Frontier Housing, Inc. and Operation Outward Research.

o A rural newspaper requested information on the impact of shopping centers in rural areas. The librarian provided a Clearinghouse computer search which identified several reports on the subject. We also suggested the International Council of Shopping Centers in New York, New York and the Urban Land Institute in Washington, D.C. for additional information.

o A small public school system in Maryland requested information on "volunteerism" projects in the area of education. We suggested that they contact the National Center for Voluntary Action in Washington, D.C. for the information.

o Additional examples of requests that required a computer search were for information on the following issues:

- marketing practices of small farmers,
- the impact of CETA on the local economy,
- the economics of scale in farming,
- the impact of mechanization on farm size,
- social and economic conditions of the elderly in rural areas,
- the impact of the coal industry on the state of the economy in Pennsylvania,
- list of all rural health hearings held in Congress during 1974, and
- small farms and land use.

Numerous information requests from NRC staff included:

A request for information to respond to an inquiry from the White House about programs — such as water policy and rural development in general.

A list of research studies done by CRS, CBO, and GAO on economic, fiscal, and monetary policy.

A New York Times Computer print-out of articles on New Mexico for a staff member working on Small Towns project.

FOLLOW-THROUGH AND EVALUATION

After the first 21 months of operation, the Clearinghouse conducted a follow-through project to determine whether the information provided had actually been useful to the people in rural communities who had requested it. An evaluation of that follow-through led us to the conclusions that:

(a) the need for information and assistance in rural areas was real and widespread;

(b) the resources and techniques we had used, although limited by design and funding during those 21 months, were wanted and useful; and

(c) it would be necessary to make a long-range commitment to continue and expand the existing programs and add new capabilities if we were to meet the challenge in a credible manner.

An additional effort to follow through on requests made in the last ten months of Clearinghouse operation has further substantiated those conclusions and produced a few additional insights as well. We are convinced more than ever that the Clearinghouse is serving a very useful function by providing a two-way exchange of information:

(a) information to the people in rural areas and nonmetropolitan towns and communities, their elected officials and organizations, and

(b) information from those same people about their needs, hopes and frustrations; failures and successes.

Technical Assistance

The purpose of follow-through on technical assistance requests is to determine whether or not the communities and/or organizations actually receive funds or technical assistance as a result of the information provided by the Clearinghouse. While everyone contacted in the last follow-through exercise praised the Clearinghouse for providing them with excellent information, in only two cases did the information or assistance lead to funding for their programs:

- The Children's Center in Mississippi received a $75,000 challenge grant from Kresge and smaller grants from Field Foundation and Southern Education Foundation. (The proposal that was submitted to Kresge was written by the private consultant whom the Clearinghouse had identified for the Center.)
- A volunteer organization in the mountains of North Carolina which had sought to identify funding resources for a program to assist in creative arts and child development was turned down by one foundation suggested by the Clearinghouse, but has been cleared by the State Clearinghouse for a proposal to the Appalachian Regional Commission, another source we had suggested.

For those groups which had not received any assistance as a result of our information, we were able to identify several problems or reasons common to all that caused this gap.

- Many organizations are unable to follow through on the leads we suggest because of problems indigenous to the program or organization. For example, the director of a planned residential alcohol and drug abuse treatment center had quit, and the sponsoring organization which had sought leads to funding sources for the center had to concentrate its efforts in finding a new director and fund-raising for the existing out-patient center.

- Some organizations never investigate the potential sources of suggested funding because they receive another grant in the interim -- usually from a federal or state government program.

- In many cases, there simply are not funds available for the particular program from the funding sources we suggest as possibilities. The Clearinghouse views this problem as one of the most serious among many problems besetting rural communities, and attempts to bring these gaps and difficulties to the attention of key federal policymakers and program administrators.

Reference Assistance

The basic criteria which we use to evaluate reference services are the quality and usefulness of the information provided. Again, in most cases the requestors have been satisfied with the accuracy and completeness of the information sent to them. One individual expressed a "deep-felt gratitude for a very complete response" and stated that "your research and diligence have saved me hundreds of man-hours of personal agony in trying to locate this material myself." From the general survey made of those to whom reference assistance had been provided in the last ten months, it is clear that:

- The Clearinghouse is able to satisfy a wide-range of requests using the on-line computer services available in the library;

- Individuals not having access to adequate library services generally like to get actual publications or documents, only some of which we can send;

- Bibliographies are found to be more useful if the individual is connected with a university or lives in close proximity to a large library;

- FAPRS print-outs are being used as a reference tool;

- The information provided is useful, and is being used to stimulate thinking and action to bring out positive attitudes about changes in rural areas. (For example, one requestor mentioned that the materials on leadership and community development are being used to develop resolutions for a conference on rural life.)

THE COMPUTERIZED MAILING LIST

During the last 10 months, some 7,000 names have been added to the computerized mailing list, bringing the total to 19,249. The list is coded to make it possible for the Clearinghouse to direct mailings to individuals and organizations according to type of agency, interest, and location by state or region.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

During this last quarter the Director of the Clearinghouse, along with NRC's President and Vice-President, developed plans for funding continuation of the basic information programs and expansion of the program to include more outreach services. A consortium of federal departments and agencies has been established and initial funding was committed shortly before the end of the original grant that is the subject of this report.

The new program of the National Rural Center is to be called the Rural Information Outreach Service (RIOS). The entire program as proposed has not been funded; but information services will continue and new types of services will be added as funding makes that possible. The 31 months during which the National

Rural Center established the Information Clearinghouse and developed its program and services to rural people demonstrated the need that officials and people in rural areas, towns and cities have for information to help them attain the kinds of life-styles and community facilities and services they want. The Center is committed to building on the established base and to continued efforts to seek support for the programs from public and private resources.

One small program like NRC's Rural Information Clearinghouse cannot meet the information needs of rural America. It can demonstrate the value of getting information to people who need and want it, and of gathering from rural people information and insights that will give direction to federal policy-makers and to the National Rural Center.

1. Mailing List Classifications

(Each name has both an Agency Code and a Title Code)

Agency Code	
ASN	Associations: Service, Research, Membership, Individuals
CSA	Community Services Admin.
CNY	County Officials
CON	Congress
CTY	City Officials
EDD	Economic Development Districts
FED	Federal Agencies: Regional, National
FND	Foundations
HNL	Rural Health Newsletter
LGC	Land Grant Colleges
PLN	Planners
POV	Poverty Agencies
RDL	Rural Development List
STE	State Officials
UNI	Unions

Title Code	
AGR	Agriculture
CDV	Community Development
COM	Communications
COP	Cooperatives
CTZ	Citizen Participation
EDU	Education
ELD	Elderly
EMP	Employment
ENV	Environment
HEA	Health
HOU	Housing
LEG	Legal Services
MET	Metro: CSA (with rural areas in SMA's)
MIN	Minorities: Black, Chicanos, Indians
PLN	Planning
POV	Poverty
REL	Rural Electric Cooperative
SFM	Small Farms
TRA	Transportation
WOM	Women
R1	CSA Agencies in rural counties
R2	CSA Agencies in rural counties

2. Major Groups of Organizations and Officials on the Mailing List

State Administrators of Community Colleges	STE/EDU
FmHA - County & District Directors	FED/CDV
Regional Planning Agencies (A-95)	STE/PLN

Economic Development Districts	EDD/CDV & FED/CDV
Rural Electric Managers	ASN/REL
Land Grant Colleges - Heads of Departments of Agricultural Economics	LGC/CDV
State Directors of Extension Service	LGC/CDV
1890 Land Grant Colleges - Research Coordinators	LGC/CDV
Legal Services Organizations	ASN/LEG
Health Newsletter Recipients	HNL/HEA
Rural Women	ASN/WOM
Members of the National Council of Farmers Cooperatives	ASN/AGR
95th Congress (To be changed to 96th)	CON/CDV
Participants in Extension Seminar on Health Education and Rural Health Care Research Forum	ASN/HEA
National Rural Development Leaders School Rural Resources Fair Exhibitors	RDL/CDV
National Rural Development Leaders School Participants	RDL/CDV
National Consumer Directory (OEO 1974) Consumer Education and Protection	ASN/LEG
Land Grant Institutions	LGC/EDU
Directory of Rural Electric Systems in the U.S.	ASN/CDV
Rural Community Action Agencies	FED/POV (R1 & R2)
University Centers (EDA)	LGC/CDV

In addition there are officials, organizations and individuals who have requested services or asked to be put on the list - coded by various interests, such as poverty, community development, and planning.

3. Numbers of Names by Agency-Code, Title-Code, State and Region

a) Agency-Code

ASN	8805
CNY	436
CON	550
CSA	506
CTY	1297
ECODD	257
FED	3952
FND	9

b) State

AK	91
AL	553
AR	679
AZ	194
CA	504
CO	276
CT	97
DC	1259

Agency-Code (con't)

HNL	796
LGC	630
PLN	49
POV	2
STE	888
UNI	61
???	111

c) Title-Code

AGR	7
CDV	7060
COP	731
CTZ	62
EDU	3868
ELD	18
EMP	108
ENV	1
HEA	2015
HOU	78
LEG	663
MET	39
MIN	1519
PLN	613
POV	153
REL	1035
R1	144
R2	301
SFM	382
TRA	96
WOM	231
???	77

d) Region

1A	1881
1B	1331
1C	1191
2A	403
2B	575
3A	1035
3B	1407
4A	796
4B	548

State (con't)

DE	66
FL	399
GA	673
HI	31
IA	461
ID	156
IL	650
IN	363
KS	299
KY	545
LA	653
MA	277
MD	227
ME	144
MI	383
MN	565
MO	481
MS	584
MT	211
NC	742
ND	175
NE	324
NH	100
NJ	152
NM	173
NV	60
NY	612
OH	476
OK	330
OR	224
PA	546
RI	32
SC	515
SD	203
TN	588
TX	1133
UT	127
VA	514
VT	120
WA	287
WI	393
WV	341
WYY	101